




AMONG THE NATIVES OF THE
LOYALTY GROUP



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ARTIFICIAL RAT-BAIT FOR SNARING THE OCTOPUS.

AMONG THE NATIVES
OF THE
LOYALTY GROUP

BY
E. HADFIELD

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
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1920

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PREFACE

A SHORT sail of some eight or ten hours from our home here at Lifu lands us on the sister island of Uvea, where we usually spend a month every year. Our visit to this beautiful lagoon island is generally made during the months of May and June, which in these southern tropics are regarded as winter months. Our thatched bungalow, of lath and plaster, at Uvea does not boast a fireplace of any kind, and often when I have been left alone in the evenings, and have felt the chilliness of night creeping on, my thoughts have turned to the warm grass hut of our native caretaker, which stood in the compound, some two hundred yards away. The middle-aged couple, who had charge of the place during our absence, were clean, intelligent people, and I knew well that, if I went to them, I should receive a warm welcome, and an invitation to a seat on their mat by the fireside.

My first visit was so agreeable that I was tempted to repeat it many times.

The house consisted of one room of fairly large size. The fireplace (öle), on the floor, was formed by four logs of wood, two of them about five feet and another

two about three feet long, placed in the middle of the house and enclosing a space in which the fire burned brightly. This fire was not composed of scraps of wood, but of the trunks of three trees, well seasoned and dried by the sun whilst still in the forest ; their three ends were put together in the middle of the fireplace and burnt with a steady glow, the rest of the trunks often projecting over the mats where the family sat.

The man and his wife took one side of the fireplace, squatting on the mat ; the other side was carefully dusted and placed at my disposal. The elder children of the family were usually out, the younger ones in bed ; that is, they were lying asleep on the floor behind their parents. The good people had finished their evening meal, the day's duties were over, and they were amicably inclined for a long chat. I think I was the most restless member of the party, not being accustomed to the squatting position. I tried sitting on the end of one of the burning logs, which projected from the fireplace, but the higher I went the more smoke I got ; for no native house has the luxury of a chimney ; so down I went again in true South Sea Island fashion.

Our conversation had of necessity a very limited range, and yet there never seemed to be any embarrassing breaks or pauses in it, so far as I can remember. We talked of " Peretania " (Britain), the white man's land, and in turn my friends related many interesting and often strange stories about themselves and their adventures. Once, when the husband told me of his having been without food during a whole month, I asked him to tell me all the details of his and his friends' (whom I also knew) experiences,

during a time of shipwreck and disaster. Other yarns followed until we got on to the subject of folklore and ancient native history. Many and quaint are the stories I have since heard both at Lifu and Uvea, though my appetite was first whetted at the latter place. It was often necessary to exercise a little discretion in these friendly chats. However absurd some of the stories might appear, I knew that if I ridiculed them in the least I should not only give offence, but sadly restrict the output of further information. I therefore listened attentively and with a grave face to the most impossible stories, in which it was only too evident they themselves partly believed; occasionally telling one of our own fables to give them confidence. Sometimes the events narrated were so ridiculously impossible that, thinking I had misunderstood the drift of my friends' words, I ventured to refer to their improbability. On such occasions, if I asked for further explanation, I was invariably told, with perhaps a shade less of affability than before, that there was no explanation, they had related it just as their fathers had told it, and exactly as their grandfathers had received it from their ancestors, who believed all, and doubted nothing.

It was only after much hesitation and under a growing sense of the value of the information which was gradually accumulating in my mind, seconded by the encouragement of a friend interested in folklore, to whom I had related some of the stories, that I ventured to entertain the thought of writing a small book, without any other qualifications for its production. Of one thing I am quite certain, namely, that much of the knowledge I have gained, in the unconventional manner referred to above, will be quite

unobtainable after the present generation has passed away. Even during the few years in which I have been collecting material for this work, my most reliable informants have become too feeble, through the weight of advancing years, to be of any further help.

In translating and narrating the quaint folk-lore stories included in the volume, I am sensible of the fact that one needs to be endowed largely with the poetical and artistic spirit, so as to lose as little as may be of their local colouring; it seems almost impossible that anyone short of a Longfellow could render them with that subtle charm with which a native story-teller manages to embellish them. Time was of little consequence to the skilled raconteur. In his soft, dreamy voice, seated amidst the scenery of his domestic life, he tells his story in his own quaint and inimitable style.

If he wishes to tell you of a man who took a long journey he will say, "He went went went, until he arrived at 'such a place'; then he went went went" (*kola tro tro tro tro*); until you seem to see the traveller getting farther and farther and farther away, and as the narrator's voice becomes slower and lower the traveller disappears in the dim distance.

In the following pages I have endeavoured to put my readers in close touch with Loyalty Island native mentality. No man is really able to know the inner workings and motives of another man's conduct. But if we understand his surroundings which determine his thoughts and actions, we may perhaps be able to form a good idea of his character and the place he occupies in the human scale.

To me it has always been a surprise to discover in

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these semi-barbarians—and quite apart from Christianity—moral qualities of a very high class. Crass ignorance, superstition, and long years of darkness have not been able to destroy all the noble and fine features which are inherent in all men.

EMMA HADFIELD.

Sept. 1st, 1919.

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PART I

AMONG THE NATIVES OF THE LOYALTY GROUP

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION—LIFU, UVEA, ORIGIN OF TRIBES *

It is now more than thirty years since our arrival in the Loyalty Group of Islands, and my first impressions, as our boat drew near the rock-bound coast of Lifu, are something to be remembered. Crowds of half-naked, wild-looking people were assembled to meet us, many of the men having long, yellow hair hanging over their brown necks and shoulders. My heart sank within me as I observed their gesticulations

*The Lifuan language in common with the other three languages of the Loyalty Group is supposed to be written phonetically, the continental vowel sounds being used throughout. The vowels *e* and *o*, however, having each at least two distinct sounds, are expressed in Lifuan, thus—

e = the sound of *a* in say.
ẽ = „ „ „ *e* in met.
o = „ „ „ *o* in most.
ö = „ „ „ *o* in word.

The consonants *j* and *x*, not having any corresponding sound in Lifuan, have been utilised for other sounds, thus—

j = *th* in this.
th = *th* in thought.

x is used to represent a sound not known in English. It may



THE SMALL CAVES OR CREVICES IN THE FACE OF THE HIGH ROCKS
WERE USED AS SECRET BURIAL PLACES FOR THE DEAD.

and heard their uncouth yellings. “What did they mean? Would the people receive us, or were they angry that we had dared to come amongst them?” I looked at our companion—an old missionary who had lived many years in the islands—and his placid face and serene smile did much to reassure me, even before he informed us that all these demonstrations were in our honour, and that the people were delighted that we had arrived.

The moment our feet touched the rocks, willing hands were stretched forth to help us, and crowds gathered about us anxious to give us welcome. They accompanied us up to the mission-house; they crowded about the verandah and peeped through the windows. One old lady was so overjoyed at the arrival of her friend—the old missionary—that she rushed into the room where we were, threw herself on the floor at his feet, rested her head on his knees, and gave vent to a series of dismal wails. Later, an old man, seemingly more affectionate than the rest, walked by my side, nodding, and smiling, and pressing the upper part of my arm between his two hands. I also nodded and smiled, and secretly congratulated myself that I scarcely reached the standard of plumpness that I understood the natives of the

be described as a guttural *k*, like the Scotch sound of *ch* in *loch*, or the Hebrew letter *ḵ* (*cheth*).

c is always sounded as *ch* in Charles; *q* is always sounded as *qu* in quality; *ng* indicates a nasal *g*, not easily pronounced by foreigners.

In the following pages, where not otherwise mentioned, native words are given in Lifuan, the singular number being employed in the case of nouns.

Lifuan plurals are formed by prefixing the article *ite* or *nöjei* to the noun; Uvean plurals by prefixing *ta je*, the *j* in this language having the same sound as in English.

J. H.



BEACH AT LIFU



BEACH AT LIFU.

South Seas preferred in their victims. I had yet to learn that the Loyalty Islanders proudly boasted that they had never been guilty of killing and eating either a white man or woman. Although these islands are only about sixty miles from New Caledonia, the natives differ in many important respects from their neighbours there. The Loyalty Islanders are a laughter-loving people, whilst the New Caledonians are of a sour or sullen temper; the Loyalty Islanders have ever had a great reverence for their old people, whereas, I am told, the New Caledonians—until recent years—took their aged parents to the top of one of their high mountains and there left them with food sufficient for a few days only.

Lifu is the largest of a number of islands called the Loyalty Group. It is about fifty miles long and twenty-five miles broad. It is of coral formation, and, judging from the appearance of the rocks along the coast (hungit), it would seem to have been raised to its present elevation by three or four upheavals. It is so scantily covered with a light red soil that it would be almost impossible to find a square acre of land on which a plough might be used. There is often good, rich soil in the deep holes among the rocks and stones, which the natives utilise for growing the gigantic taro, banana, and yams.

There are no mountains, hills, or streams; but the island is saved from being altogether flat by the interesting ridge of rocks just mentioned, about 200 feet high, running along the weather side. These rocks often form beautiful, large caves, in some of which may be found deep pools of fresh water, also numerous columns of stalactites and stalagmites, which were formerly held in great reverence by the



WATER-HOLE IN COCONUT PALM.

people, as being the abodes of the spirits of the departed.

The small elevated caves (ngönemenye), on the weather side of the rocks, were used as secret burial places for the dead. To avoid the discovery of these places of interment, the body of the deceased was taken, by two or three friends, at night, and carried many miles in a circuitous route, before being placed in its last resting-place in order to frustrate the cannibal propensities of the enemy to devour it.

People living near these rocks generally found abundance of fresh water, but others living at a distance had to supply themselves in various ways. Sometimes they scooped out a large hole (t'manu) in the trunk of a leaning palm, and above this they arranged leaves in such a way as to guide the trickling streams into the cavity below. Animals know of these pools of water. Quite recently I saw a dog scramble up the trunk of a coconut tree—much in the same way as a native would—to the height of three or four feet in search of water, but finding none, he tried a second tree, and half disappeared down the hole, where he remained for some time quenching his thirst.

Failing this supply of water, the people were often obliged to travel many miles in search of it, and then to carry it home in dried gourds or calabashes (ge). It might have been obtained in any part of the island by breaking through the rock to a depth of several fathoms; but no one knew this, and the knowledge would have been of very little use to them, since their only tools were small stone axes (ze). Now that crow-bars have been introduced, and cleanliness is becoming more generally observed, a well has been sunk in every village, at a depth of from twelve to twenty

fathoms. These water supplies are not an unmixed blessing, however, on account of the insanitary habits of the natives, for everyone, irrespective of



GOURDS OR CALABASHES. NATIVE WATER-BOTTLES.

disease or dirt, may come and lower his own bucket. We, ourselves, when weary and thirsty, have refused water from these wells, sometimes because of the

foul smell, and have heard soon afterwards that the body of a decomposed rat has been brought to the surface.

Shortly after our arrival at Lifu we were startled one morning by hearing loud shoutings on the beach. Seeing the natives rushing about in an excited manner, we felt convinced that something unusual was about to happen. Our attention was soon directed to the cause of the commotion. Away out on the horizon was to be seen a fleet of native canoes (he) approaching the island, just in the same manner as war canoes would approach when bent on an invasion.

As they drew nearer, it was evident that they were crowded with men only, though as yet no clubs or spears or other instruments of native warfare were discernible. At length the foremost craft came gliding swiftly into the little boat-cove, and several savage-looking men leapt ashore, exclaiming in great excitement, "Where is our missionary? We have come to fetch our missionary." They proved to be natives of Uvea; and so this was their peaceful errand. They had heard of our arrival from the crew of the small trading schooner which had brought us from New Caledonia, and had concluded that, as Lifu had a missionary, and Uvea had none, we had come with the intention of settling amongst them.

We assured them that we hoped to be their missionaries, but that our instructions were to remain at Lifu for some months before beginning our regular duties. On hearing this they showed the utmost satisfaction. They assured us that they would wait and accompany us to our future home. We mildly protested against the intended honour; chiefly

because the provisioning of so large a mob was a serious problem. We therefore urged them to return and wait for us at Uvea. They showed very cogent reasons, however, for their own suggestion; and finding they were ashamed to return without us, we induced them to convey some of our cases of tinned provisions to their own island, as a guarantee that we certainly intended to follow, begging them also to prepare for our arrival.

They reluctantly agreed to this proposal, and started off one fine morning with a fair wind. Later in the day the wind changed; and we afterwards learned that in entering the pass into the Uvean lagoon most of the canoes were capsized, and our cases went down in four or five fathoms of water. However, when we arrived, three months later, we found all safe, and little the worse for the wetting. Uvea is a low, sandy, crescent-shaped island, about thirty miles long and from three to five miles across. There is a ridge of rocks on the weather side, similar to those at Lifu (called '*cau*' by the Uveans), but much lower, whilst on the lee side a low, sandy beach, studded with myriads of sea-shells, forms the margin of a beautiful lagoon.

A wide embankment—about fourteen feet above sea-level—runs parallel with the sea, and on this most of the houses are built.

Farther inland, the land slopes again to the level of the sea; and there we find a large swamp, extending for many miles, which is the breeding place of legions of mosquitoes.

This swamp, with the sandy soil and myriads of dead shells, indicates that Uvea was at one time an atoll.

The whole island is so flat and low that often in the night, as the great waves thundered on the beach, I have been filled with dread lest they should break through their slender barrier of sand; and that a tidal wave should sweep over the embankment, inundate the large swamp, and leave nothing but ruin and desolation behind.

In spite of this flatness, the island is very beautiful; the late Captain Turpie, of the London Missionary Society's barque the "John Williams," has been heard to say that Uvea was the prettiest island in the South Seas; and as one sails up the lagoon, all alive with fish, studded on the one hand by numerous small islands and on the other by miles and miles of glittering white sand, backed by dark groves of palm trees, one might almost imagine he was nearing the shores of Arcadia.

We spent eight happy years on this island of Uvea, and then the London Missionary Society decided that we should add to our work the supervision of a part of the island of Lifu, and the training college there for native pastors. (Later our work was again extended, and the whole of Lifu came under our care.)

This necessitated our removal to Lifu, to which the Uveans strongly objected. We assured them that we should still be their missionaries and would visit them frequently.

They argued that the Lifuans had had a missionary much longer than they had, and were therefore better able to stand alone. "Besides," said they, "whoever heard of a father leaving his youngest child to struggle on alone, whilst he went away to look after the eldest?"

But the fiat had gone forth, and we parted with much sincere sorrow on both sides, the Uveans crying aloud and following us into the water beating their breasts in their great grief.

After we had gained some familiarity with the language and people, we soon began to find out how very different were their ideas and traditions from our own.

For example, the perplexing question of the origin of life seems to have obtained a simple and complete solution in their minds. Many will tell you that their ancestor, like Longfellow's Wattawamat,*

“was not born of woman,
But on a mountain, at night, from an oak tree
riven by lightning.”

The people of the village of Inagoth, Lifu, tell how, in the old days, a huge tree called “Pot” fell to the ground and was split open. Lying along the inside of the trunk were found a male child and a bird; another male child and a lizard; still another male child and a snake, and these three children became the fathers of the people of Inagoth. (In most of these stories the mother was often dispensed with altogether, and, indeed, who was she, a woman, to be handed down to posterity?)

Another story relates how two Lifuan women were fishing from the rocks when they distinctly heard the cry of an infant, but no child was to be seen in the neighbourhood. They listened and watched attentively, and at length they observed a small twig floating about in the water; they noticed, also, that whenever this twig touched the rocks, then the cry was heard. Being full of curiosity and

* “Courtship of Miles Standish.”

interest, they took the twig home, and found it contained two male children. Seeing, however, that the twig was from no known Lifuan tree, they concluded that it must have drifted from the clouds, and thus an alien race was introduced into the island.

Some Lifuans again claim to be the descendants of a man called Nöl. This man was more enterprising than his neighbours, and he decided to make for himself a canoe, and it should be unlike any canoe ever made on the island. He would make a house on deck, large enough to hold himself and family. Moreover, he began his work on a large open plain (hnapapa), not only many miles from the sea, but separated from it by the high ridge of rocks already referred to. His friends thought he was mad, but in spite of their jeering remarks he worked steadily on until the vessel was finished ; after which, he and his family—about ten in number—took up their abode in her.

Soon after this a tidal wave swept over that part of the island, rushed over the rocks, swamped the plain, and destroyed all the people living in the village. Nöl and his family were securely shut up in their boat-house, and this was floated in a westerly direction for about ten miles. Here they might have met with disaster had not the rocks obligingly opened and allowed the canoe to pass through into the open sea.

Many of the Uveans give a very graphic account of the landing of their forefathers at the north end of Uvea, from Wallis Island. From more recently discovered facts it is evident that this story has a measure of truth in it.

They tell us that many years ago a number of

natives of Wallis Island, which lies about one thousand miles north-east of the Loyalty group, were making canoes with their ordinary native axes, made from sharpened stone, and fixed somewhat insecurely into a wooden handle. One of these stones working loose, during the process of chopping the canoe, flew out and struck the son of the chief. The workmen were filled with horror, knowing that their own lives were in danger. They therefore determined to flee with their wives and children. As quickly as possible they embarked in two canoes that were lying on the beach. As the second canoe was getting under way, an old man called to them from the beach and said, "When you get right away from the land you will no doubt notice a large fish swimming in front of your canoe; follow him wherever he goes. When you approach a distant shore, you will see the leaves of a certain marine plant floating on the water. Observe closely the fish; if he swims *round* the leaves, follow him, but on no account land there; if he *leaps over* the leaves, then you may land with the greatest safety."

Away they went, and in course of time they noticed a large fish which constituted itself their guide. In a few more days they sighted land, and soon after noticed the particular leaves spoken of, floating on the water. Careful attention was now given to the fish, who, to their great delight, *leapt over* the leaves. The people at once landed, and made this their home, and called the place "Uvea," the native name for Wallis Island.*

* Native names of islands do not usually accord with European nomenclature. The Lifuans speak of their own island as "Drehu." Maré they call "Mengöne," Uvea "Eath" and N. Caledonia "Mak." The Uveans call their own island "Iai," and Lifu "Duok."

One of the party carried ashore a calabash containing fresh water, and laid it on the ground, and on that identical spot, say the natives, there sprang up a well of fresh water.

Many years ago a party of Uveans, amongst whom was our old caretaker, were working on board a small trading vessel. They called at an island in the New Hebrides, and found the natives speaking the language of the north end of Uvea. On being questioned, the natives told the above story about the axe and the chief's son ; but they said not a word about any fish acting as guide. These men were probably the descendants of those who escaped in the first canoe.

At the present time there are two big chiefs living quite close to each other at the north end of Uvea ; each has his prescribed territory, and each rules his own subjects. One of them, named Nickelo, claims to be the greater chief, because *his* ancestors came from Wallis Island, and took possession of the land, when it was uninhabited. The other chief—Bassett—acknowledges this, but claims that *his* ancestors were born in the place ; and to prove this he tells the following story. An Uvean, taking an early morning walk in a lonely part of the island, was surprised to hear voices in the bush. He gently pushed aside the scrub, and saw three little men sitting on a log of wood, near a pool of fresh water. He called to them, but directly they heard his voice, they jumped into the water and disappeared. He waited for some time, hoping to capture them, but he saw no more of them that day. Next morning he again visited the pool, and as there was no one there, he arranged the logs to suit his own purpose. Then

he hid himself. Just about sunrise, one tiny man appeared, and seating himself on the log began to straighten out his long, fair hair; presently another mannikin came up out of the water, and then a third. The watcher waited until they were all comfortably seated and giving their whole attention to their toilet; then he suddenly pushed the log and closed the entrance to the pool. The little men were bewildered and knew not where to fly for safety. The man speedily drove them in the direction of the village, the smallest mite going last. The first two (Wasau and Imene) presently turned aside into the bushes; but finding no way of escape, returned to the path. In the meantime, the last little man (Bahit) had become first, and as he ran towards the village the people cried out: "This one is the first, he shall be our chief," and thus it is that *his* descendants of the present day claim to be the real chiefs of the north end of Uvea. The descendants of these three retain their original names, "Bahit, Wasau, and Imene," the two latter paying tribute to Bahit.

CHAPTER II

CHARACTERISTICS, PHYSICAL AND MORAL, APPEAR-
ANCE, GRATITUDE, TRUTHFULNESS, HONESTY,
INTELLIGENCE.

THE Loyalty Islanders might rank amongst the handsome races of the earth, were it not for their thick lips and distended nostrils, and even these features are not nearly so pronounced as in the case of the African negro.

Their soft, large, brown eyes ; glossy black, wavy hair ; white, pearly teeth, and the various depths of rich brown colour of their skin, all contribute to their attractiveness. But who shall define beauty ? A Lifuan half-caste girl once told me that she had *never* seen a good-looking white man, and I know she admired some of the Lifuans. A New Hebrides boy, enlarging on his sister's great beauty, seemed to think that he had proved it beyond all doubt when he said, " And she has a nose just like a little pussy's."

The Lifuans are of about the average European stature, having well-shaped limbs, broad chests and well-developed muscles. The man, " Sallyday," whose fine physique awakened the admiration of the late R. L. Stevenson during his South Sea voyage, was one of our Lifu men.

Superficial observers have been heard to say that

these people are entirely destitute of a sense of gratitude, but we, who have lived amongst them for more than a quarter of a century, can testify that they are



LIFUAN GIRL.

not lacking in this virtue. Their ideas are not the ideas of a white man, neither are their methods his methods, and appearances are often against them, as, for instance: Many years ago, when we were

living at Uvea, my husband was seriously ill, and could take no nourishment except in the form of liquids. I knew there were fowls in the village, and



LIFUAN GIRL.

sent to buy some for soup. The messenger returned, saying the people were unwilling to sell. I noticed also that the people kept away from us, the pastor, however, came occasionally to inquire about the

invalid. I felt deeply grieved. Was this, then, their gratitude to us, who had helped them and cared for



LIFUAN GIRLS.

their sick? In course of time my husband became convalescent.

Soon afterwards we received a visit from all our people of the village. They arranged a large heap of

yams, taro, fowls, and other good things before us. Then, seating themselves on the ground, their spokesman addressed us somewhat as follows: "O missionary, we have been greatly grieved to hear of your serious illness. We have kept away from you, because, as there was nothing we could do, we thought we had better not trouble you with our presence. We are greatly rejoiced now that you are getting better, and we have brought you this present to show you how great is our love for you." They had refused to sell me their fowls lest they should have none "to show their love" when their friend recovered; if he had *not* recovered, then they would probably have brought them to me, when they came to sympathise with me: for island custom demands that none go empty-handed on such visits. Moreover, they were partly fatalists, and what difference could a few fowls make if their friend was destined to die?

But it is of the old times I would speak. The people shared and shared alike, and none needed to go hungry whilst his neighbour had food.

They did not feel called upon to make any great demonstrations of gratitude on receiving gifts of any kind from their neighbours and friends. Communitistic ideas prevailed amongst them to a very large extent, so that help rendered to another was, in a sense, a benefit conferred upon themselves, seeing that it contributed to the common weal. Also, as will be seen later, their absolute subordination to their chiefs (ite joxu) precluded the idea of private property. They trusted each other implicitly. Household utensils were left outside their huts or by the roadside; garden produce was stored in little sheds

on their plantations where persons so disposed could help themselves without being seen.

Theft was of very rare occurrence, but whenever it was detected, and the culprit found, he received little mercy. On Uvea his top lip was split open, and often two or three of his fingers were beaten off with wooden clubs. The Lifuans killed and ate the thief.

A very strong incentive to a Lifuan to keep honest was the superstitious belief that he had that if he strayed from the path of rectitude some calamity would overtake him sooner or later; he believed his sins would find him out. He knew that the owner of the missing property would seek the aid of one of the "wise men" (*tene haze*) of the island, and this sorcerer, with the help of his accomplice,—a locust (*nengeteij*) would not fail to discover the thief.

Their mode of working was as follows. After the sorcerer had heard the story, he went off on one of his solitary rambles, and he was soon joined by his ally, the locust, who acted as pilot and flew a little in advance of the "wise man," until they came to the place where the culprit was. So that there should be no mistake, the locust at once attacked the thief, and beat him so severely about the head and face that he cried out for mercy and confessed his guilt. Even young children were not exempt from severe punishment, whenever they were found guilty of this crime. One of their elders, often the parents themselves, bound the child's hands together, and severely burnt them. Some time ago an old man showed me his hands, from which all the fingers and thumbs were gone from the second joint. He told me that

when he was a child he had meddled with, not stolen, some sweet potatoes (kumala), a rare luxury in those days ; and because of this his elder brother in his anger had held the small hands over the fire, and so burnt them that they were maimed for life. There was a veiled note of triumph in the old man's voice as he gave a little laugh and said his brother was dead.

But in these days gentler and more persuasive methods are used.

Seeing a number of people grouped together, on one of our *fête* days, I drew near, expecting to see some interesting game going on. I saw nothing to account for the assembly, neither could I gain any information ; moreover, the people acted towards me in a most cool and unusual manner, as though I were an intruder. I passed on wondering, but learnt later that some money was missing from one of the houses in the village, and suspicion had fallen upon the children, who were not supposed to realise the enormity of the crime. The pastor had assembled all the young people and talked seriously to them, exhorting the thief to return that which he had stolen. To help him to do this, and to relieve him from the terrible ordeal of making a full confession, the pastor had sent *all* the children into the bush to make up a small bundle of leaves, then to bring them and lay them before their elders. It was hoped the money would be found in one of the packets, but alas ! they were all empty. I think it was at this point that I joined the group, and everyone felt too sorry and ashamed to let me know what was going on.

One might easily imagine that these people knew very little about the meaning of " thine " and " mine,"

because it was quite a common practice for a man to pick up any piece of property lying in front of your door and to walk off with it, looking at you all the time and knowing that you were watching him. But the very fact that you *were* watching him saved the act from being dishonest. You saw what was going on, and if you wanted the article that he was taking you had only to tell him to leave it alone, otherwise, "silence gave consent."

Again, a man would go into his neighbour's place and carry off any special thing which took his fancy, answering only with a laugh if he were requested to leave it alone. It was well understood, however, if he were permitted to carry off the coveted article, that, following the custom of the land, his neighbour would some day swoop down upon him and either reclaim his own property, or, what was more likely, carry off something of far more value.

The people of the village of Kumo, about six miles from here, have lately felt the injustice of this absurd custom.

Some time ago the young men of Kumo came to this village, and seeing that our "Hmelhom," or men's house, had lately been provided with new mats, they rolled up every one and walked off with them. Our young men "lay low"—they knew their time would come; and it did, about a month ago. Having to pass through Kumo, they ransacked the whole village, killing almost every pig they could find, irrespective of breed or condition, and made themselves a great feast, the Kumo people passively submitting.

There is still a very good rule on the island that a traveller, far from home, may satisfy his hunger

or thirst from any man's garden or coconut tree, provided he, at some later date, acknowledges his indebtedness to the owner ; but to take these things and remain perfectly silent about them was in their eyes equivalent to stealing.

Some time ago a white woman stole a fowl belonging to a native woman, and when she was found out offered



As the boys grew to years of discretion they went to sleep in a large house called the "hmelhom," which also served as the Town Hall of the village.

to pay for it. When the native woman was telling me about it, she said, "I don't want her money, or any payment ; I don't set such great value on my fowl ; but," and her voice was tremulous with the insult put upon her, "why did she not tell me that she had taken it ? "

As it was with honesty, so it was with truthfulness. Again it was a question as to a native's conception and definition of truth. A man returning from

fishing would assure you he had caught nothing—he had absolutely no fish—at the same time opening his bag, and offering you two or three. His “no fish” meant simply none worth mentioning; and everyone, knowing island etiquette, quite understood that.

To tell a lie because you were afraid to speak the truth was considered excusable; but to tell a lie with the intent to deceive, and especially to a stranger, was indeed a serious offence.

I am told that when the French soldiers were here to take possession of the island, one of the gendarmes was taking a Lifu man to prison from one part of the island to the other. They had tramped many weary miles, and were crossing a large plain, far from any native hut, when the gendarme became so overcome by the fierce heat of the sun and by thirst that he sat down by the roadside, feeling it was impossible to go any farther. The Lifuan grasped the situation at once, and said to his captor, “If you will loose my bonds and allow me to leave you for a short time I will try to find you a refreshing drink.” No doubt seeing incredulity in his custodian’s face, he continued, “You need not be afraid, I give you my word of honour I will return.” He was allowed his liberty. He started off and, after being away for some time, he returned with several young coconuts. Both men partook of the refreshment and rested a while, then the prisoner submitted to having his bonds replaced, and the two continued their journey.

Amongst a people so far removed from the centre of civilisation as these Loyalty Islanders are, one can hardly expect to find a cultured, well-developed mind,

as compared with that of a European ; but they are certainly not wanting in mental equipment, and given the same opportunities as an average white man, I think many of them would prove his equal, even if they did not surpass him.

They are adepts at picking up languages ; and it is quite a common occurrence to meet a man who knows one, two, or even three languages other than his own. These are generally the men who have been away working on board ship or in New Caledonia.

A native's sense of sight and hearing is also unusually well developed. A minute speck on the horizon is quickly recognised by him as a foreign vessel, and a green parrot or dove, embowered in foliage of its own colour, and quite hidden from the eyes of a European, is very quickly detected by him.

Although they can by no means compete with the Australian trackers, they are very quick to notice anything unusual, as they walk, single file, along their narrow paths. Often these paths wind in and out, to avoid scrub or stones that would injure the bare feet ; and they sometimes become so overgrown with grass and scrub as to be almost indiscernible, and strangers very easily lose their way. We have done this sometimes, and once we were lost for so long a time that we began to think we should have to spend the night in the bush. We kept going, however, and soon struck what we thought to be the right track, and shortly afterwards we were rejoiced to meet one of our old schoolboys, who had come in search of us. Asked by what means he had traced us, he said. " As I came along the rocky path I saw a small patch of sand. I examined this, and found traces of boots, and I observed that the toes pointed in a northerly

direction, whereas your destination should have shown them pointing towards the west."

The Loyalty Islanders have also great oratorical gifts, and are particularly strong in the use of figurative language. For example, some time ago I was at a large meeting, where a man stood up and protested against the revival of heathen dancing. After speaking for some time, he said, "Many years ago a foreign vessel came to our shores, and the captain wanted some of us men to go with him as sailors. To all who applied, his chief question was, 'You savez pull?' All the men said they could pull, and several of them were engaged. They gave great satisfaction, until one day a new order was given, and they were told 'to pull *back*.' Now the Lifuans did not understand the word 'back,' but knowing something was expected of them, they gave more energy to their pulling forward, and the louder their captain shouted 'back' the harder they pulled 'forward.' Then in a deep, impressive voice the speaker went on to say, 'Men of Lifu, you don't know the word "back," but you can all pull. There must be no going back to heathenism; but with one heart, and one mind, you must all pull, and you must pull forward.' "

CHAPTER III

LIFUAN CHIEFS—THEIR POSITION AND POWER.

THE inhabitants of the Loyalty Islands were divided into tribes, and each tribe occupied its own well-defined territory, which was governed by an absolutely despotic chief (*joxu ka tru*), who was practically deified by his subjects, and who, consequently, demanded and received unquestioning obedience.

There was no idea of private property among the commoners. The very stones, trees, soil, food, live-stock, articles of personal adornment, nay, their very lives, were at the absolute disposal of their chiefs.

His royal highness issued his mandates through his numerous prime ministers, or “mouthpieces” (*ukeineqë*) as they were called in the vernacular; and they proclaimed them to the smaller village chiefs (*joxu ka co*), who in turn announced them to *their* mouthpieces, and thus the wishes of his highness eventually reached the common people or “aminates.”

The big chiefs, however, were not unnecessarily harsh or severe in their personal contact with their subjects. The notion of *noblesse oblige* was evidently a settled article of their faith.

When a royal progress was being made through some part of the chief's dominion, should his royal

eye alight on some treasure which aroused his cupidity, instead of roughly demanding it, or proclaiming it as his rightful property, he simply



UVEAN CHIEF.

expressed a mild admiration of it to the owner, well knowing that in the course of the next few days it would be brought to court as a present to his highness. Even in these enlightened days, the practice still

obtains to a large extent ; but now that pigs, poultry, etc., can so easily be converted into money, this royal prerogative has resulted in the practice of a little cunning on the part of the common people ; so that it has become the custom to hide away all valuable property until his majesty has passed by.

In the event of a royal visit, as, for example, when the chief of another island or district, with his large retinue, was to be entertained at court, then all ceremony was banished, and every one's property was ruthlessly requisitioned ; their livestock and food for the feasting, their precious personal ornaments and articles of value for presents, and they themselves as cooks, fishermen, dancers, etc., for the entertainment of their visitors. At the present time these royal visits are beginning to be regarded with feelings of resentment ; naturally, with the advance of civilisation, the people realise the injustice of having their plantations and coconut trees stripped, and their homes impoverished for months to come.

The French Government has often forbidden these unjust heathen practices, but so far with little result. The people are not yet sufficiently imbued with a sense of the rights of man to make any complaints to the French officials. Of course, no real progress can be expected to be made under these circumstances.

The people have time and ability to develop the resources of the island to an almost unlimited extent. Scores of thousands of acres of land are lying useless and fallow, since there is little inducement to labour where the tenure of property is so uncertain. The big chiefs are not wise enough to forgo their prerogatives in order to encourage the development of their

dominions. Soon after the present missionary arrived here, he expressed surprise that so much evidently good land should be left untilled, and he begged the natives to clear a certain portion and plant maize for the Noumean * market. Being anxious to oblige, the people complied, and they soon had a very fine crop. The big chief heard of this enterprise, and readily offered his private yacht to convey the corn to Noumea. This offer could on no account be refused, and, as the natives probably expected, the reward of their labour was coolly confiscated by the chief.

Friendly chiefs not only visited each other, and showed each other the utmost kindness and hospitality, but even their subjects were trained to reverence the very name of a big chief, of whatever tribe. A hint from a neighbouring chief of his desire to possess himself of any article of property in his friend's dominion was respected by the owner as much as if his own chief had asked for it. This practice seems to find confirmation in the following story related among the legends of the island.

“A giant named ‘Onocia’ was once said to reside in this district of Wēt, whose proportions were so enormous that whenever he coughed or sneezed he was heard at a distance of eight or ten miles. The big chief of the neighbouring district of Lösi heard of this giant and his attributes, and concluded that the man must surely be possessed of unusually large and powerful lungs; and he pondered so long on this subject that at length an overwhelming desire seized him to gratify his cannibal propensities. He therefore expressed a

* Capital of New Caledonia.

wish to have the lungs and liver of this giant cooked and served up to him.

“ Envoys were at once dispatched, and the desire of the big chief was made known to the giant. Alas ! poor man, he was only a commoner—an ‘ aminate ’ ; his enormous strength could not be employed against royalty. To refuse to yield himself to the will of the chief would be infamous ; still, he determined to try what he could do to propitiate his would-be murderers. He prepared a large present of yams (koko), taro (inongoth), etc., and took them himself to the foreign court. But how could such ordinary food satisfy the cravings for lungs and liver, and *such* lungs and liver as his ? The present was accepted, however, and part of it was cooked for the evening meal, but at the same meal the *pièce de résistance* was the lungs and liver of the poor giant.”

A chief, like all other Lifuan men, wore no clothing until he reached the age of about twenty-five or thirty years, after which he was expected to clothe in suitable attire. This he did by twisting three or four coils of cane, or dried vine, round his waist, after which he was ranked as an adult, and never again returned to the puerile freedom of nudity. His wife also complied with the requirements of the times, and from the husk of coconuts she made herself a skirt or fringe, from five to fifteen inches in depth, which she wore round the waist, or, rather, hanging from the hips. Fashions never changed ; all dressed alike, but the chiefs fastened their girdles differently from others, and also wore more elaborate ornaments.

On ceremonial occasions, when the chief dressed in full war-paint, he fastened an immense dolium shell on his forehead, and in his thick, bushy hair he

arranged two long wing-bones from a sea bird—probably the molly-hawk—which stood almost erect, and from the points of which dangled two beautifully worked tassels. Round his arms, legs, and waist were twisted thick coils of brown wool, often ornamented with small cowry shells. This wool—"dela"—was made from the fur of the flying fox (thila). It was very highly valued, probably because of the immense amount of work entailed in its production. It, as well as the shells, were used as current coin of the realm, the small cypreas "wasisis," if *very* small, being worth quite recently about two pounds the pair. Commoners wore smaller coils of this wool, and generally cheaper shells.

Chiefs and "aminates" alike had their ears pierced, and generally wore small pieces of coral in place of ear-rings. These holes were the only pockets the men possessed, so they became the receptacles for various treasures, and gradually increased in size.

In times of mental trouble or bereavement they were torn down, and, ever after, the lobes of the ears hung in two small tassels.

The septum of the nose was also pierced, but in place of a piece of coral, a small part of the back of the cuttlefish was shaped into a long, oblong form, with tapering ends, and the thickest part of this was fitted tightly through the septum. If by any chance this hole got torn down, no attempt was made to repair it, it also hung in tassels. But whilst I have often seen ears torn down, I have never yet seen the septum of a nose hanging in tassels; still, as I have already said, the ears were deliberately torn down, but the nose never.

Domestics for the royal household were chosen

yearly from amongst the girls and widows of the villages. All persons of good physique were eligible, and everyone was competent to do the work re-



A REAL UVEAN, OR ABORIGINAL, OR JAIAN.

A man of mature years with his ears pierced. In the holes he carried various odds and ends.

quired of her, that is, to cook the national dish, the itra, and to work in the plantations. There seems to have been no payment or perquisites, and little

honour pertaining to this office. Indeed some of the women preferred remaining with their own families. They were not afraid of the work, but they feared lest they should transgress court etiquette by speaking in the patois of the "aminates." For there was a court language, which differed so much from that of the commoners as to form quite a distinct language. For instance, a girl speaking to her equal would say "Ase hë huni xen" (we have finished eating), but to the members of the aristocracy she should say, "Azeti hë anganyihunieti xötrönëtie" (we have finished eating). Again, "Tro jë mekol" (go to sleep) is quite enough for an ordinary person to hear, but to a chief one must say, "Jotëti angacilieti a huedëti" (go to sleep).

When any person was greatly startled, he invoked aloud the name of his big chief, or the chief of his own village ; and if a child was in danger the cry would be, "Alas ! the child of——," naming the chief of the place to which the child belonged.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL LIFE—HOUSES, FURNITURE

IN the olden times people lived in small communities, scattered over various parts of the island—sometimes in single families, but more frequently in small groups. Since the advent of Christianity they have drawn nearer together and formed themselves into villages.

A large spreading tree—generally a banyan (sa)—helped the people to decide on a site for a village. They knew that whenever their small houses became oppressively hot they would be able to find a cool shelter under this tree, where they could enjoy the gentle breeze, talk with their friends, or lie down and sleep, as they felt disposed. So a large space was cleared about it for the village green, on the outskirts of which the little grass huts were set up.

Every man was his own house-builder, with the help of all his neighbours and friends. Twenty or thirty men would work at one house, which would probably be from ten to sixteen feet long, eight feet broad, and from the eaves to the ridge pole fourteen or fifteen feet. Generally the houses were built of an oblong shape, but occasionally they were round, on the New Caledonian model. They were thatched throughout from floor to peak, sometimes with the leaves of coco-

nut trees (dohnu), at others with the grass of the sugar-cane (mangoe), but all the *best* houses were thatched with a long grass (jez) specially preserved for the purpose. The women and girls supplied all thatching material. They pulled up the long grass by the roots, and tied it into small bunches, ready for the men to use ; these bunches were again made up into huge loads, which they carried on their backs



The framework was made of rough pieces of wood with the bark knocked off.

looped over the shoulders—often for many miles—into the village, and placed conveniently to the spot where the house was to be built. The framework of the house consisted of rough sticks and posts, firmly lashed together with green vines (otet) or strips of bark.

Although the women were held in such low esteem by the men, and their wishes invariably set at naught, their opinions were sometimes deferred to on these

house-building occasions ; thus—if ever a woman entered her house during the course of erection and objected to certain pieces of wood that had been used in its construction, these pieces would immediately be removed, and others substituted, no matter at what inconvenience or labour ; otherwise the people believed that at some subsequent date the whole construction would fall down and cause disaster to the inhabitants.

The thatching (*nyima*) was done by the men, who generally worked in pairs ; the one outside passed the twine over a bunch of grass, and pushed the needle (*cil*) to his mate inside, who, in his turn, wound the twine round one of the small laths and passed the needle back to his friend. The men made their own needles from pieces of hard wood, which they sharpened at one end, and burnt a small eye through at the other. Several men were told off to toss up the bunches of grass to those working on the top of the house.

During house-thatching there was always great noise and excitement, every man on the top urging the men below to toss up the grass with the utmost speed. The women meanwhile were preparing the food, which on such occasions must be of the best quality and in greater abundance than usual.

As the boys of the village grew to years of adolescence, they left the parental roof each night, and slept in a large house called the “*Hmelhom*”—a house strictly reserved for the male sex. This building also served for the town hall, and all important municipal councils were held there. If any youth absented himself from this house and slept in the village he was recalled to a sense of the impropriety of such an

action by hearing, in the early morning, a chorus of voices chanting his name, accompanied with many insulting insinuations as to the cause of his absence.

The "Hmelhom" and the houses of the chiefs were much larger and stronger than any of the other houses. They were built on immense pillars, and had double doors, the posts of which were trunks of trees three or four feet in diameter, and ornamented with grotesque carvings. Moreover, the chiefs of Uvea had fences made of rude trunks of trees eight or ten feet high, and placed quite close together. These fences were evidently not intended for fortifications, because they extended along the front of the premises only, and openings were left here and there, flanked by thick posts. A part of one of these fences still remains at the north end of Uvea and measures about thirty inches in diameter.

Whenever one of these houses, or fences, had to be built, there was an unusual amount of yelling and shouting. Apparently the natives believed, contrary to our axiom, the more noise the more work. It was surely no mean task to cut down the large trees, and prepare the massive posts, with no tools except their small stone axes and the aid of fire (eë); indeed without the latter the feat would never have been accomplished. Whenever a certain tree had been decided upon, a fire was kindled about its roots. Whilst this was burning, the men examined their stone axes, and made sure that they were securely lashed to their rough wooden handles and fitted well into the sockets that had been prepared for them. As the fire burnt the tree, the charcoal was chipped away until the trunk was almost burnt through, when a good strong push hurled it crashing to the ground.

In a similar manner, burning and chipping, the superfluous branches were removed. Through the end of the trunk a hole was burnt to facilitate the hauling of the log, and around this a deep indentation was made. The men then passed a strong rope, or vine, through the hole, and several times around the deep cutting, after which the log was ready to be hauled into the village. Some twenty or forty men seized hold of the rope, and away they went shouting at the top of their voices, and evidently deriving so much pleasure from their united labour as to lose sight of the fact that it was both difficult and arduous work. As they went along, they chanted a very monotonous song, the words of which had no meaning whatever. The leader sang "Chōpe hia," and the rest, with a good strong pull, sang, "hia, hia, hia."

The earth floors of the houses were covered with coconut leaves, and over these were spread fine, clean-looking mats (ixōe) made by the women from the leaves of the pandanus. These mats served as carpets by day and blankets by night. An uncovered space, about three or four feet square, was left in the middle of the floor, just opposite the door, and this was framed or enclosed by four thick pieces of wood, and formed the Loyalty Islander's "ingle nook" (ōli). Fires were kept burning here day and night, generally made up of three or four logs of wood with their ends placed in the middle of the square. Here, around this spot, the people sat and ate, talked and slept, in happy ignorance of all hygienic teachings.

The huts were ventilated by one very small door, by which the fresh air entered and the smoke from the fire escaped. They were comfortable and warm in winter and cool in summer. To have a good supply of food, and to be able to pass the day in absolute

idleness, seems to have had great attractions for the majority of the islanders, but, alas ! every pleasure has its price, and their lazy, dirty habits encouraged swarms of flies, fleas, bugs, body lice and other objectionable pests.

Fortunately, Lifu was comparatively free from mosquitoes ; not so, however, the island of Uvea. Here were to be found myriads of these little musical insects, during the greater part of the year ; indeed they are still so troublesome that often the people are obliged to leave their houses, and, with the exception of their faces, bury themselves in the cool, fine sand on the beach.

Another plan the natives often resorted to, when the mosquitoes were uncommonly troublesome, was to assemble together in one of the houses, preferably one with an unusually small door, where they made a dense smoke, and a large fire, to drive out the mosquitoes or to stupefy those that remained. Then, knowing nothing of the real need of ventilation, and never having heard of such things as microbes until they were introduced by the missionary, the people shut themselves up in this little hut, closed up every small crevice, and waited patiently until the break of day. No wonder that we hear of many of the weaker ones being overcome with faintness in such a foul atmosphere.

In such houses as I have described, furniture, as we understand the term, was an unknown luxury, and yet many native treasures were to be found there. Beautiful fine mats covered the floors ; the walls were adorned with fishing nets and rods, ropes, spears, needles for thatching, needles and mesh for netting ; whilst in one corner were generally found two or three

water-bottles (ge). These last named articles were very artistic. They were dried gourds or calabashes, beautifully netted over with fine sinnet, a piece of which was also plaited to form a handle.

Over the fireplace, suspended from the roof, was a shelf or tray (ipekō) about three feet in diameter, on which fish was smoked and preserved.

Cooking utensils were few and simple. The *left* valve of a small mussel shell was greatly appreciated for scraping the dirt and skins from the vegetables; it *must*, however, be the *left* valve, because this particular part fitted over the front end of the first finger of the right hand, being kept in position by the thumb. Its Lifuan name was “ Fizi ” or “ chipper,” and the native name for European scissors is “ Ifizi ” (a set of “ fizies ”).

A knife (hele) made from hard wood was also necessary for cutting up the food into small pieces, or rather levering them off; to sever portions of the yam in any other way tends to make it tough. A Lifuan legend describes how this shell and knife came into use. It runs as follows: “ A certain old woman who lived alone and far from any other human being was greatly distressed because she had no fire with which to cook her food and keep herself warm. She was, however, possessed of certain powers, which enabled her to converse with all inanimate objects about her. Seeing a mussel shell lying on the ground, she bade it go and get some fire for her, but it refused. She then observed a piece of hard wood lying on the ground, and to that she made known her wants. Without delay the wood started off to do her behest. It met a screw-pine, but the pine refused to help. Five times did the wood beg for assistance

and five times was it refused ; but the sixth time it was successful, and joyfully hastened back with its treasure. The old dame was delighted, and in bestowing her blessing on the piece of hard wood she said, ‘ From this day forth you and your successors shall never come in contact with anything that is unclean. You shall always be well cared for, and you shall always cut the food *after* it has been cleaned from all dirt. But as for you,’ turning to the shell, ‘ from this day forth you and *your* successors shall be condemned to pass your lives in low and dirty work. It shall ever be your lot to scrape off the dirt and skins from all vegetables after they are taken from the ground.’ ”

When food was plentiful the natives were very improvident. They cooked far more than was necessary ; they sent it as presents to their friends, who probably had more than they could eat ; and as food cooked with coconut sauce would not keep good more than one day, the people ate to excess and threw away the rest. A Lifuan proverb says, “ Throw stars up to the sky,” or “ Give to him who has abundance,” as we should say, “ Send coals to Newcastle.”

Even in these enlightened days, the people often make themselves ill by eating too much ; especially is this the case when there is a good harvest. The natives themselves admit that whenever food is plentiful there is more sickness than usual amongst them ; but they may account for this by telling you the following story :—“ In the days of old, the chiefs and their sons had the power of transforming themselves into all kinds of animals. On one occasion, a young chief took upon himself the form

of a rat, and went reconnoitring under ground. He came upon a large cave, inhabited by a demon (Uleulë), in the shape of a man, who received him kindly and offered him food. The rat observed, however, that the food set before him was not so white and appetising as that which his host was eating ; so he begged that a small portion of the superior food might be given to him. To this the demon objected, giving as his reason that such food was intended only for those who dwelt under ground, and must never be eaten by human beings.

“The rat made no reply, but he was not pleased. Directly he reached home, he related all his adventures to one of his brothers, dwelling largely on the tempting appearance of the forbidden food. Finally the two decided they would return together to the cave and, if necessary, force the demon to give up a portion of the coveted treasure. Again they were cordially received, and refreshments were offered to them, but, alas ! none of the kind they so ardently longed for. In looking round, however, they noticed a small piece laid carefully on one side, and the moment their host’s back was turned they snatched it up and rushed off to the upper regions. Uleulë hastily rushed after them, but he was not quick enough to recover his treasure. He was extremely angry, and sent his malediction after the two culprits in the following words: ‘Whenever you have a large harvest of my food—the yam—I will levy a heavy toll upon you, and will claim for myself, or for death, a large number of your people.’” Hence the Lifuans attribute their sicknesses and deaths to the effects of the demon’s curse and *not* to unrestrained indulgence in eating.

The Lifuans also say that this demon and his

satellites still dwell in their subterranean home, and that whenever they call to mind the sacrilegious plunder of their food, they are filled with wrath and indignation, and endeavour to create a famine in the upper regions by pulling the growing yams, planted by the natives, down to their own realms ; and so powerful are their efforts that they shake the whole island, much to the amusement of the natives, but to the dismay of the Europeans, who fail to see the humorous side of earthquakes.

When food became scarce, and this happened almost every year during the early months, the natives never seemed to have attributed the famine to their own wasteful prodigality. On such occasions they tried to satisfy their hunger by eating the bark of certain trees, wild fruits, the roots of the gigantic taro, as well as another root called " Zi," which root takes about twenty-four hours to cook to remove its acrid taste, and even then it is scarcely suitable to be used for food, many people suffering very much from inflamed and ulcerated lips after eating it for several days.

However much the people suffered from famine (jine), they never learned to provide for emergencies. They seemed to have made up their minds that famines were unavoidable—most disagreeable things whilst they lasted ; but everyone suffered alike, and everyone bore the trial with stoical patience, drew tighter his girdle, and looked forward to better times, when the new yams would be ready for gathering.

Just before the real harvest, small yams were taken up for the special use of the chiefs, the aged and the young children. Young men and maidens, and all people of robust health, were expected to deny

themselves still longer until the yams attained their full size.

For the most part the Loyalty Islanders were vegetarians, not from choice, but from necessity. Occasionally an abnormal craving possessed them for animal food, and sometimes during sickness this developed to such an extent as to be regarded as part of the malady, which the patient was too feeble to fight against, and the friends, recognising the symptoms, scoured the bush in search of wild birds, crabs, land shells, grubs, rats, flying foxes—indeed nothing came amiss except the white owl (men), the kingfisher (ciciôte) and the lizard. Of the three last named no native could ever be induced to partake; believing as he did that they were embodied spirits. Neither would he kill them, lest he should injure the person whose spirit was enshrined in the bodies of these uncanny creatures.

The Lifuans have a special term to signify a desire for animal food—"pi," wish, "öni," animal food; so that when anyone receives an invitation to "öni," he knows that some kind of meat will form the principal part of the food set before him.

In these days the people often "öni," for there are not only cats and dogs, pigs and fowls, but occasionally a dead horse or cow is handed over to them. Whether the animal is accidentally killed or dies of some disease is immaterial to a Loyalty Islander. Indeed few things in the form of meat food come amiss to him; even if he knows the food is unsuitable, he will often eat it, and take a strong emetic afterwards.

An old man, a servant of ours, once gravely warned us against eating a certain fish that had been given to

us. He assured us we should be ill if we ate it ; but that the fish should not be wasted, he begged us to give it him, saying that although he would have the pleasure of eating it, he would also have the pain of returning it, by means of a strong emetic—a large dose of salt water.

One meal per day was considered sufficient for any man, but there were so many stopgaps, such as sugar-cane, coconuts and wild fruits, that outsiders have declared the one meal began in the morning and ended when the people lay down to sleep.

The national dish was a species of steamed pudding, baked on hot stones, and covered with earth. The Lifuans called it “ Itra,” the Uveans “ Bunya.”

Every evening all ranks and ages partook of this dish, which was both nutritious and delicious. The people never wearied of it ; they never felt the need of salt or appetisers ; they had always the sauce Nature gives to those whose lives are spent in the pure fresh air. But as time goes on these simple tastes are becoming more and more depraved. I heard recently of a feast that was held *à l'anglaise* at one of our villages, where an honoured guest helped himself to a piece of bread on which he spread a thick layer of butter, then of jam, then of condensed milk, and lastly of mustard, which was served in a soup plate. He took one huge bite ; and left the table in haste.

The making of the family pudding—the “ itra ”—formed a very important part of a woman’s daily routine. It was undertaken with great deliberation, and some solemnity. Every woman was an accomplished cook ; that is, she could make one dish, and she made it exactly as her grandmother and great-grandmother made it.

During the day she brought from her garden a supply of vegetables, coconuts and banana leaves (hmetreun); and as the sun sank towards the horizon she turned her attention to preparing the evening meal.

She took her seat on the ground and arranged all the necessary articles about her. She began by stripping off most of the fleshy ribs from the banana leaves, after which she passed the leaves over a blazing fire to make them soft and pliable. She peeled the yam and taro, and as these would be injured with washing, great skill was needed to keep them quite clean. The yam was stood on end, and whilst the cook held it in place with her left hand, with her right she chipped away every scrap of skin and dirt with her little thimble of a mussel shell. She knew that later on she would need to pour sauce over her pudding, and she prepared for this now, by making a slight hollow in the ground, or forming a ring of small stones. Over this she arranged, in all directions, lengths of thin vine, or mid-ribs of banana leaves. These vines were about three yards in length, and were so arranged that all the ends were on the outside. Over them were laid in the same manner about half a dozen banana leaves—the old torn ones first, and last of all the young, soft, velvety ones which nature had not yet unfurled, and which must be neither cracked nor broken, otherwise they were useless. A proverb says, “Ase hē kuie la dohno”—the banana leaf is broken, or the thing is done and can’t be undone. The leaves were all gently pressed down into the slight hollow, into which the yam was chipped with great care and precision. Herbs, crabs, fish, flying fox or other

dainties were laid on the top—and over all a rich white sauce (zane ono) was poured.

This sauce was made from the milk of one or two coconuts ; by the milk I mean the real juice of the kernel ; and the process of extracting it is one of the most important items of “ itra ” making. Etiquette and long-established usage demanded that certain individuals only were eligible for this work. Young men and boys and very young girls only were allowed to render this service. Should any of them marry, however, or transgress the moral laws of sex, they were strictly debarred. So rigidly was this rule observed that if ever a youth was found making this sauce and secretly living an impure life, maledictions were heaped upon him by the elders of the community, and if he happened to be the heir to the chieftainship, he and his family were sometimes disinherited.

There were special occasions, however, when married women, and girls of mature age, were not debarred from making this sauce ; but it must be for their own family only—no visitor, or relative, must be invited to eat with them ; and this, with a Lifuan's large idea of hospitality, somewhat embarrassed the family. But such food was regarded as impure, and any man would willingly go hungry in preference to partaking of it, the very thought of which filled him with nausea and disgust ; and any woman offering hospitality under such circumstances and deceiving her visitors would expect to be punished by having all her teeth drop out.

As to the preparation or manufacture of this sauce ; the boy first scraped the nut with a serrated shell, letting the snowy flakes drop into a part of a

gourd or calabash, shaped like a dish. Instead of a shell a piece of hoop iron is now used, with teeth cut into one end like a saw, and for further convenience it is fastened to a slab of wood. Water was added to the scraped coconut, and the whole was kneaded together until a thick creamy liquid was produced.



The nut was scraped with a serrated shell.

The boy then took up in both hands a quantity of the nut, with as much liquid as possible, and tightly pressing it between the palm of the left hand and the fingers of the right he pointed the thumb downwards so as to form a kind of spout down which the liquid flowed, and was regulated over all parts of the itra. The nut was then replaced in the gourd and mixed

again with the liquid, after which the squeezing and mixing were repeated until all the liquid was taken up and poured over the vegetables. The pudding now



MODERN METHOD OF SCRAPING THE COCONUT.

required to be covered up, and the cook did this by taking the ends of the leaves from below, folding them with great care over the top, and fastening

them in their places by the numerous vines which were arranged previously under the itra. These were wound round and round, and over and under, until not a drop of the liquid could escape or a grain of dirt find its way inside. The itra was now ready for the oven, which had still to be prepared. One naturally wonders why this was not done before—it *is* in these



A strict etiquette prevailed as to who should squeeze the sauce over the "Itra."

days, but formerly the responsibility of making an itra was quite heavy enough, without the distraction of watching a fire burn up and die down.

The fire was laid in the same way as the leaves and vines for the itra—namely, by making a slight hollow in the ground, and over this was arranged alternate layers of wood and stones about the size of an ordinary potato, until the pile was considered sufficiently high; after which the cook set fire to the whole and sat

down to watch it burn. As the wood burnt, the stones sank into the hollow, in a quivering white heat ; some of these were removed with a long pole (cilat), and others were arranged in a smooth layer in the hollow. The itra was placed on this glowing mass of stones, and then, with a pair of tongs (akofe), made from a piece of



The " Itra " is now ready for the oven.

bent cane, the rest of the hot stones were arranged about the sides and over the top, being held in their places by layers of fresh leaves—those from the castor oil plant (gum) being preferred. The cook then buried the whole under a heap of dirt which she shovelled up with her hands, and her arduous duties were then over. It simply remained for her to find an old woman, place her on the top of the heap, and

she by some occult power was supposed to know when the itra was well cooked. Failing the old woman, a stone was occasionally flung at the heap of dirt; if it struck and went off at a tangent, the food was not yet cooked; if the stone went right over the top, the cook knew that her pudding was ready to be taken out of the oven.

When the time for the evening meal arrived the family assembled with great deliberation, and waited patiently for any missing member, for it was considered bad form to show the least eagerness to begin to eat.

The itra was placed upon the ground, in the leaves in which it was cooked; and when everyone had settled down comfortably in his place, the wife opened the top leaves, folding them round the sides, so as to make a rim to keep in the sauce.

At these times, dread of a sudden attack by some enemy usually possessed their minds; and it was customary for the head of the family to provide himself with a stout stick, or club, to protect himself and family in case of any surprise.

Much etiquette was observed in eating, and quite an unexpected grace was shown in conveying food to the mouth. A small piece of yam was taken up on the point of the mid-rib of a coconut leaf, (watidohnu), but more frequently with the thumb and two fingers of the right hand, then with a graceful little curve it was leisurely and daintily carried to the mouth.

Everyone helped himself to the food immediately in front of him; there was no hurry; no reaching beyond for dainty bits; but each one looked after his neighbour and saw that he had his full share.

Passers-by were cordially invited to stay and eat, no matter how small or large the itra might be. The head and shoulders of fish were the choice cuts—they contained the eyes, and other dainty morsels—and these were given to the women; this is the only case I have ever heard of, except in that of house-building, where deference was shown to the women;



The "Itra" was placed on the ground and the family seated themselves around it, the father having a club near in case an enemy swooped down upon them.

no, there was a third instance of this, for no woman was expected to eat fish that was possibly unwholesome—the men ate that, and followed it up by an emetic of salt water.

Whenever a number of persons sat down together to an itra that contained fish, birds, snails or flying fox, the man who ranked lowest in the party saw that these dainties were equally divided; but should he, for the time, happen to be the host, his position was

exalted, and some other person of low rank took upon himself this duty.

A stranger visiting amongst them took precedence of the chief, and the choicest food was placed before him. If possible he had an itra all to himself, and no member of the family would accept his invitation to join him ; if no separate itra was possible, then the one provided for the family was placed before him, and at his invitation his host and family became his guests.

In the matter of food, more than in most things, the Loyalty Islander loves making a display ; and sometimes all the women of a village would make itras and present them to the visitor they delighted to honour. They knew he could not possibly eat more than one of these, and that as a matter of course he would invite all the villagers to eat with him. Sometimes twenty or thirty of these itras have been given to us at one time for ourselves and our boat's crew. One of the leading men of the village made an eloquent address in presenting them ; and one of our party responded, thanking them for their great generosity and saying that as they had provided for us far more food than we could possibly consume, we should be very pleased if they would all sit down, and help us to do justice to the good things provided. It was a very happy gathering—the villagers had shown their generosity and good will to us ; we had done the same to them ; the etiquette of the country had been strictly observed ; all was in good form, and all the people were contented.

Some time ago we had occasion to attend a large meeting held at the opposite end of the island, and the home of one of our big chiefs. People were there

from all parts of the island. In the evening of the day of our arrival, the day before the meeting, we were requested to seat ourselves in a large circle around a huge pile of food, which was not regarded as real food, but as light refreshment, such as oranges, bananas, water melons, sugar-cane and young coconuts.

About two thousand of us sat down, mostly on the ground, leaving plenty of room in the centre for the speakers, who, we knew, would rush about and get very excited as they warmed to their subject. Lifuans love meetings, they are born orators and good listeners. The food was presented with many speeches from the men of the district assuring us of a hearty welcome. They were too polite to remind us that we might have been just as welcome in the olden days ; when, instead of feeding us, they would have fed on us.

In the midst of a great silence, a fine young bull was led into the arena, and for a second we almost imagined ourselves in Spain. The animal was a present, specially provided for those who had travelled the longest distances, and were consequently the greatest strangers. More speeches followed, after which the animal was led away. Next morning he was again brought forth and given to the missionary as a present from the people of this district. One may imagine the wonder and astonishment and, I think, disappointment if the missionary had said, "Thank you, I will take it home with me." Their faces would have shown nothing, the matter might scarcely have been spoken about among themselves ; but I am afraid the missionary would have lost caste, as being ignorant of the etiquette of the land, and who

would have sufficient courage for that? But the people knew their friend, and it was quite in accordance with their expectations when he thanked them for their generosity and requested that the bull be killed and divided amongst the people as *his* present.

However many faults and deficiencies may be detected in the Lifuan's character, surely in the matter of food and eating they might put many of our countrymen to shame.

They have many unwritten laws on these subjects which are still strictly adhered to. For instance, never eat quickly; it denotes gluttony; always eat the food just in front of you, and never notice any dainties a little beyond; never eat before people unless they are eating too; share whatever you have with others, no matter how small it is, *and* look pleasant about it; take whatever is offered to you, whether you want it or not—to refuse would show a spirit of ingratitude—but take it slowly; indeed, if you can, ignore the gift for one or two seconds, then put out your hand and take it rather reluctantly, as though *you* were the one conferring the favour. By acting in this way you will prove that you are by no means of an avaricious disposition; if you are eating when an older person joins you, offer the food to him at once, and if he takes the whole of it look quite pleased and satisfied.

During one of our visits to Uvea, we were starting off on a shell-collecting expedition with some of the boys and girls of the village. A few of us were in a canoe with the itras (called in Uvea *bunya*), etc., whilst the rest of the party walked along the sandy beach, towing our canoe behind with a strong rope. At the last moment the little daughter

of our caretaker came rushing up, and wanted to accompany us. We placed her in the bow of the canoe and started off. I asked her if she had eaten anything before starting. She gave me a shy look and a winning smile, then shook her head. She would not own to being hungry, but she gladly accepted a few bananas. For some time she sat quietly gazing about her, then she began to get restless, and fidgeted about until her back was turned partly to us and partly to her friends on the beach, with her knees pulled up to her chin. I watched her quietly, and soon saw that she was having a struggle between natural politeness and the cravings of an empty stomach. The hand that held a banana was resting on her knee, and at certain intervals her mouth went down to it, and after taking a bite she turned her face towards the sea whilst she ate it. She was but a child—her hunger was appeased, and no one, she hoped, had noticed her breach of good manners.

Again etiquette demands that you should depreciate whatever you give to another. Speak of a string of fish as two small fish, and of a pile of food as just an *itra*.

Many years ago, before I had learnt this form of politeness, we arrived at a village, tired and hungry, expecting dinner would be provided for us. I noticed that there was an entire absence of the usual bustle and hurry which generally indicate the preparation of food, and I began to fear we were to go on our journey dinnerless. The pastor received us most kindly, and after talking with us for some time he quietly said, "Would you like to eat a few sweet potatoes?" Now sweet potatoes are about the commonest food they have, ranking with the English-

man's turnip ; but turnips are sweet to a hungry man, so we smilingly accepted his offer of a few sweet potatoes. He bade us follow him, and we soon found *his* sweet potatoes meant a sumptuous feast of good things.

As I have already said, you are expected to accept whatever is offered to you ; but you may at once pass it on to some other person, even though your benefactor be standing near. The present is no longer his—it is yours ; and shall a man not do what he likes with his own ?

If you are very popular with the natives, or if they feel they are indebted to you, they will sometimes come in a crowd, bringing you a present of yams, taro, nuts, fish or fowls. These things they will arrange before you, and whilst this is going on you are expected to observe nothing, no matter how the fish leap or the fowls flutter. But when the spokesman addresses you by name, waves his hand towards the pile of food, and says that the chief, and pastor, deacons, and church members, non-church members, and the rest of the people of the village have brought you this present to show their love to you, then only will you notice the things which lie before you, and give full expression to your great admiration and surprise at the generosity of the chief, pastor, deacons, and all the people of the village.

It is a pretty sight to see the families sitting around their evening meal. When it is fine, they prefer sitting outside their little huts, where the cool breezes blow about them, whilst their bright fires light up the graceful palms over their heads, and seem to intensify the dense darkness around. Now that they are no longer afraid of the enemy swooping down upon

them, they look very happy and contented ; there is no worry, no hurry. When the meal is over there are no greasy pots or pans to be washed ; but these are now becoming necessities in every household. The good housewife gathers up the leaves of the itra and throws them on a rubbish heap near at hand. The soiled fingers are wiped on the trunk of the nearest tree, or rubbed through their tousled locks ; there may be a loud smacking of lips and sucking of teeth, and then, the most agreeable pastime of the day is over.

But public or tribal feasts were much more highly appreciated than family gatherings.

Every man provided his own food and tried to outdo his neighbour. He gorged himself to his heart's content, enjoyed the society of his friends, and no doubt imagined himself, for the time being, as a person of some importance.

The slightest excuse was sufficient to call a feast. Whenever a child was born the relations and friends rejoiced with the parents ; but as this was not easy to do on an empty stomach, a feast was made, which was named " the feast of eating the baby." Marriages were celebrated by feasts ; not always at the time of the wedding, but a few weeks afterwards. At the present time, European food is very much used, and even knives and forks, plates and spoons. The more ambitious are beginning to make rough seats and tables. A feast of this description was being held at a village a few miles from here, when an old man appeared on the scene. For some time he spake not a word, but gazed on the company with great scorn ; then bursting out into abuse, he exclaimed, " What do you mean by eating in *that*

position? Do you imagine that it is possible to fill your stomachs sitting up like *that*? Get down on the floor and enjoy yourselves; get down, I say, so that you can eat satisfactorily and fill your stomachs"; and then, his wrath and indignation getting the better of him, he poured out such vials of scathing



TABOO.

Occasionally the big chief placed a taboo on all the coconuts in his district.

remarks that the young men, being unable to bear the shame and disgrace, rose up in a body and fled.

Occasionally the big chief placed a taboo (*masua*) on all coconut trees in his district, by having a few leaves, or bushes, tied to one of the trees. There seems to have been no reason whatever for this, unless it served as a demonstration of the chief's power. Whenever the taboo was removed, the nuts were gathered into a huge pile, and divided amongst the people.

who were so delighted at the generosity of their chief that they made a large feast and called their neighbours and friends to rejoice with them. A big chief still taboos the nuts, but no feast celebrates its removal; rather is there secret grumbling and dissension; for the nuts are no longer divided, but made into copra, and the money claimed by the chief for some special luxury for himself.

In all their feasting, and at their evening meals, the Loyalty Islanders were not in the habit of drinking, until the repast was over; then water and young coconuts (*mankanu*) were their only beverage.

Occasionally the young men indulged in a coconut drinking bout, but this was never followed by any grave results. They went off in a company, and when they found a grove of palm trees loaded with young nuts, they would settle down in a shady spot to enjoy themselves. Here they stayed for hours chatting, drinking the young nuts, and eating the soft, pulpy kernels. A young nut contains between one and two gills of water, and the men reckoned about twenty nuts for each person a fair allowance. (I am told that one of our Lifuan chiefs drinks, and eats, regularly about twenty nuts a day. After making a hearty meal, he was seen once to eat and drink nineteen young nuts as a kind of dessert; and occasionally he is able to consume about thirty.) It was of small importance if the young men felt somewhat uncomfortable after their dissipation—they had enjoyed themselves, and were willing to take the consequences.

CHAPTER V

WORK—AGRICULTURE, FISHING, HOUSE-BUILDING

WE all admit that climate is a potent factor in determining the industrial qualities of a people, and it is therefore not to be wondered at that in these beautiful Loyalty Islands, with such charming, though at times enervating, weather, and also such prolific soil, the natives should be somewhat lacking in energy and industry. Provided for so bountifully by nature, and with so small an outlay of labour, we should expect to find them, as indeed they are, almost incapable of steady and continuous work. Should occasion arise, however, for the execution of any big undertaking, such as house-building, scrub-clearing, etc., they would work quite as well as the average Briton, for several consecutive days; and if the noisy laughter and chattering and shouting with which they accompanied their toil were any criterion, they certainly enjoyed their work.

In the absence of any such call for exertion, much of their time would be spent in wandering aimlessly about in the bush; or the time would be passed pleasantly enough lounging about the home, sleeping in their cool huts, or under the shady palms, and as the cool of the evening drew near they would meet under the spreading banyan tree for a friendly chat.

It was, of course, necessary that some work, such as gardening, should be done with more or less regularity ; but as there was no great honour attached to planting or weeding, these duties were naturally relegated to the women and girls, who soon became expert agriculturists. Moreover, it was generally believed that food planted by male hands would never grow. Nevertheless, the men generally helped at one or two operations which entailed heavy labour—such as cutting down and burning the scrub and young trees, or digging the ground. To “*geu*” means to cut down and burn scrub ; and the month of “*Qeu*”—May or June—was the proper time of the year for this work to be done. Moreover, it is said that the whales came into the bays around the coast to nurse their young about this time, and their spouting suggested a cloud of smoke, such as is commonly seen at *geu* time.

After *geuing*, or burning up scrub, came the laborious work of digging up (*trohnen*) the sun-baked land. This was indeed no light task, but here again the men offered their services.

The only tools they had were thick staves of hard wood, pointed at one end ; and these were prepared during the month of “*Ugewejë*.”

Now “*Ugewejë*” (prepare your stakes) was a cold month, if one may so describe a temperature of 56° or 60° Fahr. ; hence it was customary for the men to sit by the fireside all day long, alternately burning and whittling the ends of their stakes, until they were sufficiently strong and pointed to penetrate freely into the hard ground. Never for a moment would anyone think of digging up the whole of the plantation ; that would indeed be a great waste of labour. Special

spots were chosen where there seemed to be a good depth of earth, and into this the stake was driven two or three times, being worked round and round, to and fro, until the whole patch was well pulverised. The women scooped the soil out of the hole, and before returning it they freed it from all hard lumps, stones, weeds and roots. Into this bed of soft earth the growing end of the yam was planted (or a small whole one), and when the little shoots appeared above ground a number of light branches were arranged over them, forming a kind of booth, which answered the double purpose of supporting the vines and sheltering the roots from the fierce rays of the sun at a later period.

At this season of the year the weather was becoming fairly hot, and the husbandman, unaccustomed to such work, finds it necessary to lean often on his wooden stake as it rests in an inclined position in the ground, and so the month for digging is called “crooked stick”—“Qalewejë.”

Every man was a landed proprietor, and possessed more ground than he cared to use; besides which he could always hire any piece of vacant land that he might fancy, on the understanding that he gave the owner a small portion of the produce.

A plot of land chosen for a plantation was generally one that was covered with young trees and bushes, because these indicated by their height the length of time that the ground had remained fallow.

The yams found on Lifu in the early days were mostly of very poor quality and few varieties; but now the natives are very keen after new species. Those mostly in favour at the present day are—“kokoetha,” an early variety; “hanefin,” a white

and floury yam ; “ wameloj ” and “ wangelawa,” both chiefs’ yams ; “ seuseu,” a white yam with a red and purple skin ; “ wamunetrawa,” a red yam shaped somewhat like a man’s hand ; “ cilo,” dark purple ; “ wabe,” a long red yam, very difficult to cook. Loyalty Island yams vary in length from a few inches to three or four feet. Great care has to be exercised in handling the long ones so as not to bruise them, otherwise they would soon decay and be unfit for storage. Many of these large yams were enclosed in plaited coconut leaves and passed round as presents. In this district of Wēt, custom demanded that no “ aminate,” or commoner, should break open these leaves ; and this virtually meant that all large yams done up in leaves were the perquisites of the chiefs or members of the royal family.

Perhaps the most famous yam ever grown at Lifu was that referred to in the following story. Amongst a family of grown-up sons there was one Walilimē—the youngest (cipa)—who incurred the anger and jealousy of all his brethren. He was of a bright, happy disposition, whilst they were, for the most part, surly and discontented. They suspected their brother of possessing some secret to which they were unable to discover any clue. They imagined that by some occult power he could allure birds to his snares, fish to his nets, and supply himself with an abundance of food and wild fruits. Meeting him alone in the bush one day, they agreed to kill him and bury him on the spot. This they did, hoping, no doubt, that some of his wisdom and skill might enter into their own bodies. Years afterwards, some of the brothers, not recognising the overgrown place as the spot

where their brother was buried, decided to turn it into a yam plantation; and a yam was planted over the boy's grave. At the time of harvest this special yam was found, not only more deeply rooted than the rest, but also extending a considerable distance along the ground. Not wishing to injure it, the gardener worked long and patiently to free it from earth and roots; and just when he thought he had succeeded, he heard a voice from the depths saying, "This yam belongs to me." The man was rather disconcerted for some time, but overcoming his fears, he set to work again. When he thought the yam was quite free from all obstructions, he put forth his full strength and lifted it from the hole, but to his intense surprise out came a youth with his arms around it, who exclaimed, "This yam belongs to me." After the gardener had somewhat recovered from his amazement, he ventured to look at the face of the youth, and to his horror he saw that he was no other than the murdered brother; and even worse still, that he himself was recognised as one of the murderers.

Sweet potatoes were propagated by planting (tran) the tendrils of the old roots—three or four tendrils in one bunch, and three or four bunches in one soft patch of earth. No supports were needed.

The young shoots of taro were replanted in soft, marshy soil, and mulched with dead leaves and grass. The large swamp at Uvea offers a splendid field for this tuber. It is several miles long, and resembles an immense field of lilies not yet in flower. The women sometimes work there in water, knee deep; but their disagreeable toil is amply rewarded, for they have food the whole year round, and one can rarely find

such delicious taro as that grown in the swamps of Uvea. The Lifuans grow this food also, but not in swamps; hence it is of very inferior quality. There are few varieties of this vegetable. There is the "taro pumpkin," so named from its resemblance to a pumpkin (fuo); "Ineish," which is red and white in colour; and the "Amane," which is celebrated for its numerous shoots.

Whenever the Lifuans are short of food, they dig up the small yams they formerly planted as seed, leaving the new shoots in the ground. These dead yams are called "afit." The Lifuans pretend they like eating these dead yams, which are hard, tough, wrinkled and almost tasteless; but the Uveans declare that eating dead yams is closely akin to eating dead men, and they will have no "afits" in their itras.

Thanks to a good climate and the nature of their food plants, there was never any difficulty in preserving cuttings, bulbs, or seedlings for planting; nor was the work of cultivation nearly so arduous as in less favoured countries. The tendrils of sweet potatoes, the growing end of yams, or a whole yam, a whole small sweet yam called "Wale," and the tops of the sugar-cane, simply needed to be placed in the ground, and, except in unusually hot weather, they grew and flourished without watering or weeding. At the present day maniota, from which tapioca is made, is grown, and propagated by pieces of the stem being broken off and replanted; shoots of cabbages are now also treated in the same way.

Coconuts were always prized, and the only attention they needed was to be left untouched on the ground where they had fallen from the tree.

After the banana tree bore fruit once it died down, and several young ones sprang up in its place and needed no care whatever beyond being thinned out and transplanted.

The clumps of sugar-cane, towering to a great height, were in danger of being damaged by the strong winds; and so for safety they were lashed together—the canes too were improved in quantity of juice and flavour by this process.

By working *well* for two or three days per week, the Loyalty Islanders might have had abundance of food all the year round.

After the planting was all done the garden was rarely visited—certainly never watered, and only weeded about twice in the season, when the weeds threatened to choke the plants.

There were certain superstitious rules strictly observed in connection with gardening. No well-wisher expressed appreciation of a friend's garden; believing as he did that such praise would cause all the roots to wither up; neither would he point at young gourds, or pumpkins, lest they dried up and dropped off.

After the toil and fatigue of clearing and planting the people felt the need of rest and relaxation. They usually availed themselves of this period for visiting their friends on the neighbouring islands, or made themselves as comfortable as possible in their own homes, and waited patiently for the food to grow. Many of the natives who have worked amongst white people, away from the island, and seen what advantages result from the use of manures, are beginning to question whether it would not be well to use them in their own plantations; but so far no one has had sufficient courage to begin.

Perhaps the chief objection to this innovation is the feeling of disgust experienced by the natives at the thought of anything in the way of food being taken from the midst of that which they regard with such repugnance, and (as their custom is) cooking and eating it without washing.

The time of harvest was indicated by a certain small beetle (*dië*), which made a peculiar humming noise as he flitted to and fro in the evening ; also by certain leaves turning red and falling to the ground.

After the land had been used for a rotation of two or three crops, it was allowed to lie fallow ; or, as the natives said, it was allowed time to breathe, until it was again covered with a thick growth of useless weeds and saplings.

Although, as I have said, there was abundance of land, and that near to their homes, every family made one or two plantations at a distance of several miles away. This foolish custom is still observed, and whenever we have ventured to point out its absurdity to any of the natives, showing how much time was wasted going to and fro, and the long distance they were obliged to carry their burdens, the people invariably looked very grave and said, “ Yes, all that you say is quite true ” ; but no attempt was made to effect a reform. We often wondered at this, until an old pastor once said to me, “ If our gardens were close at hand we could easily get to our food, and we should use it extravagantly either by eating too much ourselves, or giving it away ; but when our gardens are miles away, we are obliged to be careful, because we can only carry home a limited supply, and it is impossible to rush off and get more at a moment’s notice, and this is a great advantage to us.”

Although the cultivation of the soil involved but little labour or skill, it was not a work to be regarded lightly or complacently. Their food plants were remarkably free from disease, but suffered considerably from the depredations of rats (aji), flying foxes (thihlë), and pilfering birds, to prevent which the natives resorted to the use of scares (waza), in the designing and making of which no little ingenuity was shown. One of these represented a hawk (huzu) on the wing. The body was formed from an unhusked coconut, and the wings were made of a few sticks covered with a fibrous substance (Ipanu) from the coconut tree.

Another scare was made by stringing together a number of bulimus shells of one or two inches in length. One end of the cord was tied to the tree bearing the fruit; the other was given in charge of an old woman, who sat in the shade, and whose duty it was to rattle the shells whenever she saw a bird coming near. If no old person was available, the end of the cord was allowed to hang loose, to be gently moved to and fro by the wind.

Still another scare, and one that was most effective, was made by placing a number of short sticks in the ground, about the roots of the tree that the natives wished to protect. These sticks were perfectly harmless, but to the birds they were suggestive of hidden dangers.

The opprobrious epithet "man o' bush," denoting a person lacking in intelligence, could never truthfully be applied to the majority of Loyalty Islanders. For want of opportunity they might know little of the outside world, but in their own province they showed great skill and observation.

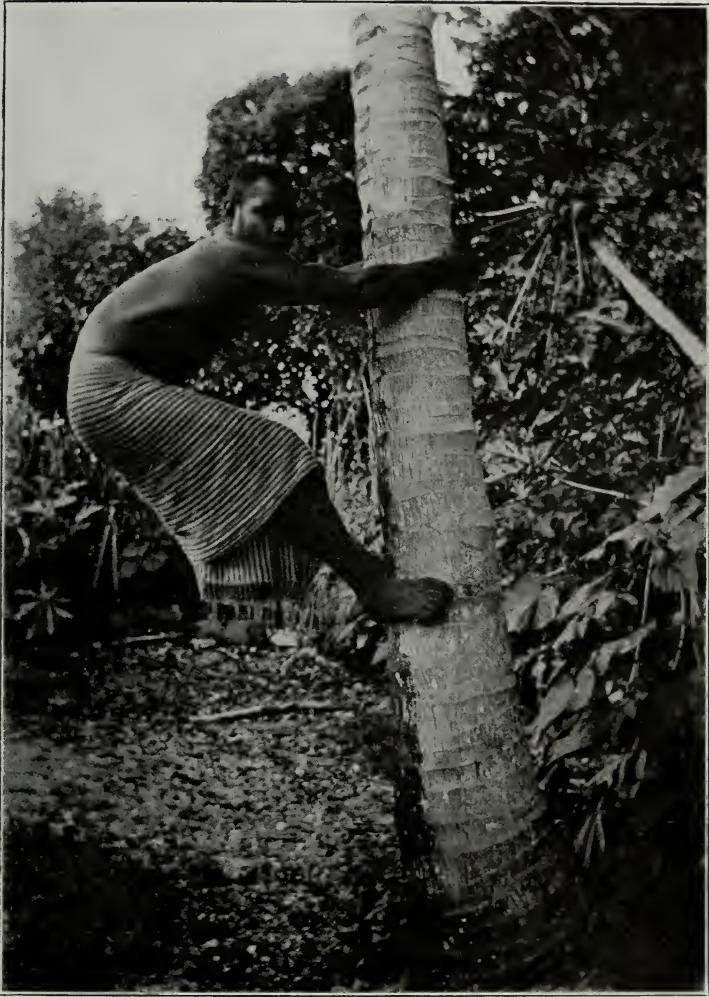
The men knew the nature and durability of most of their trees, the value or otherwise of their juices, and also how to use them for several domestic purposes.

They were able to walk up the highest coconut tree with almost as little difficulty as walking along the ground, and this, too, without the aid of rope, cutlass, or any other climbing gear used in various countries for this purpose.

Although the Lifuans or Uveans had no such original weapons as the Australian boomerang, their fighting stones were thrown with unerring aim and great force ; and so expert were they with missiles of various kinds that they could bring down a bird on the wing.

Both men and women knew, or thought they knew, the medicinal properties of most of the wild herbs, and when out in their plantations, or at a distance from home, they were rarely at a loss to provide themselves with whatever they needed.

Women were neither supposed to climb trees nor throw missiles ; but they could do both most efficiently. Whenever a woman felt hungry or thirsty, she could supply herself with young coconuts almost as easily as a man ; neither did she find any difficulty in opening them. After driving a stout pointed stick into the ground, with the point upwards, she took the nut into both her hands, and with all her force she brought it down on the point of the stake ; then with a dexterous twist she levered off a part of the husk. With a good stake three such blows were enough, but with a rough stick, such as she would be likely to find near her garden, or by the roadside, five or six strokes would be necessary. The shell was easily broken against a tree trunk or stone, or even one



They were able to climb the highest coconut tree almost as easily as walking on the ground.

nut against another, always remembering to strike the nut on the end where the three eyes are located.

If ever she found herself in want of a receptacle in which to carry her produce, she immediately broke off two or three leaves from a coconut tree, and in a few minutes made for herself a good, stout basket ; then looking around she soon discovered and dragged



In a few minutes she made for herself a good strong basket.

from the tangled bushes long lengths of vine (otet), which she wrapped round and round her basket ; not forgetting to leave two loops with which to hang it on her shoulders.

Sometimes a stack of firewood—lashed together with the ever useful vine—was placed on the top of the bag of food, and away went the toiler with the assurance that her burdens were well secured and that nothing would be lost on the way. However

heavy the load might be, the bearer never supported it with her hands, but the heavier the burden the more she stooped; swinging her arms to help her along, or sometimes crossing them over her breasts. Frequently her heavy load was augmented by the



Women may be seen with a bundle of garden produce hooked on their shoulders and a child swinging in a little hammock in front.

youngest member of the family, who might be seen swinging from the mother's shoulders, in its little hammock (*ingönepeng*), in easy reach of its natural supply of nourishment.

The men considered it *infra dig.* to carry burdens; but whenever they accompanied their wives they

walked in front, swinging a spear or club. Notwithstanding all this burden-bearing, probably, indeed, because of it, the women of to-day carry themselves erect even to old age; whilst many of the men, comparatively young, show indications of curvature of the spine, or similar constitutional defects.

Just in proportion as the women excelled in agriculture, so the men were expert fishermen. To them, however, fishing was work; there were no ardent followers of Isaac Walton—men who were satisfied to sit hour after hour, well pleased if they got an occasional nibble. The amount of pleasure a Lifuan derived from the sport was in proportion to the number and quality of the fish he caught.

All fishing tackle was most neatly and carefully manufactured by the natives themselves. The nets (eöt) and lines (eu) were of twine, made from the bark of trees or husks of coconuts in the following manner. The husks or bark were well dried in the sun and broken into shreds. Two or three of these shreds were twisted into strands, by rolling them with the hand down the bare thigh. The ends of the strands were left in irregular lengths, so that they could more easily connect with other strands; this was also done by rolling them down the bare thigh.

The nets and lines were generally made by men of certain villages—notably by those whose homes were situated a considerable distance from good yam-producing ground; and they were given as presents, though with the tacit understanding that after the yam harvest an equally valuable present of yams should be returned. Men of these net manufacturing villages whose legs were not denuded of hairs by the process of twine-making were looked upon with dis-



The netting was done by the old men.

favour as lazy members of society. Many of the fishing lines were as fine as silk threads, whilst others were strong enough to pull in a large shark. Netting needles (sili egom) and meshes (awe) were made from certain hard woods found in the forest, a great favourite being a dark-coloured wood, which after using a little time became as black and shiny as ebony.

Netting (sili eöt) was done by the old men. Many times I have asked who first introduced it; but the answer was invariably the same, "Our fathers taught us, and their fathers taught them." We found a few years ago that with the advance of civilisation this art was threatened with extinction, and that in some villages not one man knew how to net. Happily we have succeeded in reviving it, and I think that now every (Protestant) boy on the island knows how to net, for netting and twine-making are two subjects we require from the boys at our yearly school examinations. The natives find it much easier to exchange their sun-dried nuts (copra) for European nets than to make the nets themselves; although they complain that foreign-made nets are not nearly so durable as their own, because, being too tightly twisted, they take longer to dry, and so are apt to rot and break.

Two kinds of nets were used. One (cono) was about one hundred yards long and four or five feet deep. This was used in shallow water, for enclosing the fish and dragging them to the shore. It was weighted with small stones along the bottom, and light floats of wood along the top; both of these were selected with the greatest care, that they might be uniform in size and weight.

The other net (egöm) was mounted on a light wooden frame and was for hand use.

One method of catching fish with this net shows some ingenuity as well as considerable power of observation. It was as follows.

At certain times of the year a species of whitebait visited, in shoals, the shallow waters near the rocks. Whenever these fish (munum) were frightened, they rushed together and swam in a body or line about a fathom and a half in length. Bearing this in mind, a few natives sometimes surrounded these fish, and simultaneously gave vent to one of their hideous yells, which so terrified the fish that they crowded together and tried to escape in a body. But an expert fisherman, with a net in his hand, was waiting for them. As the fish turned he dived and placed his net just at the head of the procession, and thus secured the lot.

Fish-hooks were cut from pearl or tortoiseshell. They were beautifully pointed and curved, but never barbed, and they varied in size and shape. In examining these exquisite hooks—some of them a quarter of an inch in diameter—one marvels that the men, with their big clumsy fingers and without the aid of any carving tools save the bits of sharp stone or rock they used, could do such delicate work. The making of these hooks certainly involved a great amount of patience and labour; and one cannot wonder that the native-made fish-hooks have long been superseded by the European variety. I doubt whether one specimen of the shell fish-hook has been seen on the island for a great number of years, with the exception of those in my own collection. The following story may serve to show the great value the natives attached to these hooks.

A Lifuan of the name of Zazang was fishing with a hook that he valued very much, and that he had

made himself. He hooked a fish, but before he could land it the line broke, and the fish got away with the



Some of their fish-hooks were made of tortoiseshell, others from marine shells

hook in its mouth. Zazang was in great distress, and many days he brooded over his loss. At last a

brilliant idea occurred to him. He made an itra—native pudding, and this he presented to one of the “wise men” of the island, at the same time begging his assistance in recovering the lost hook. The “wise man” ate the itra ; then declared his inability to find the hook, saying that his occult powers did not extend over the fishes of the sea.

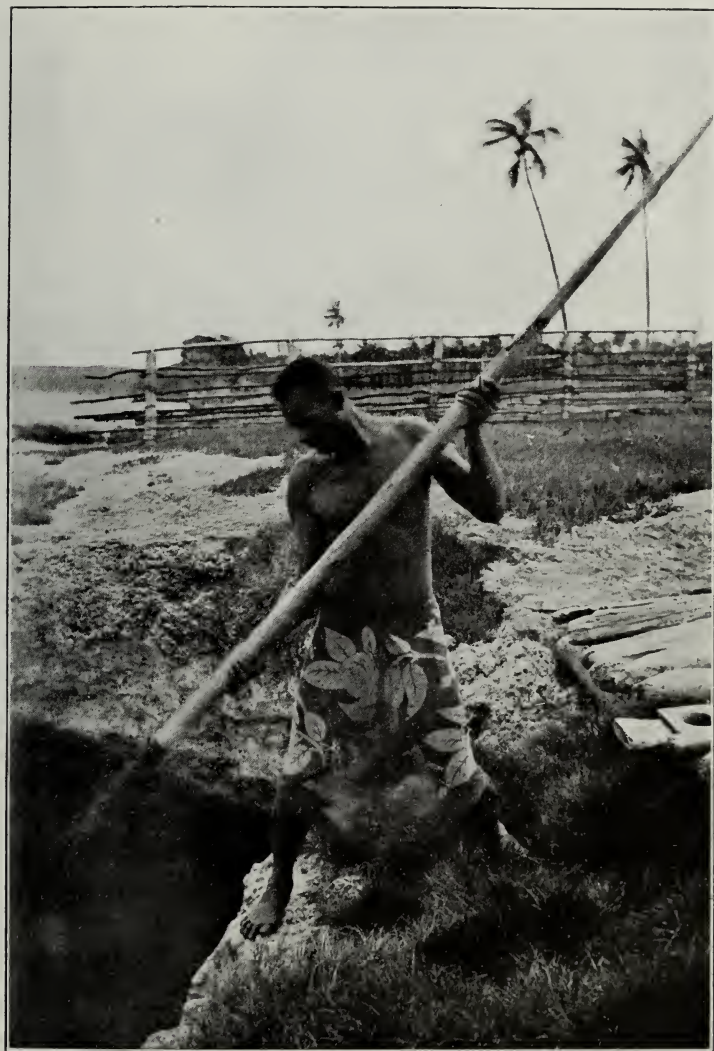
Zazang made one itra after another, and presented them in succession to every “wise man” on the island. Every one ate the itra, but none had power to restore the lost hook. One day Zazang was going moodily along the road, when he was accosted by a stranger, named Xetiwon, who showed by his conversation that he was well aware of the cause of his (Zazang’s) trouble. “Ah,” said he, “if only you had asked *my* help, and made *me* an itra ! However it is not too late even now. Make me an itra as quickly as possible, and I guarantee to restore your lost hook.”

Zazang lost no time in making the itra and in placing it steaming hot before the stranger. It soon became evident that this “wise man” was no fraud ; for he said, “Leave the food just where it is. I will find the hook first, and eat afterwards.” He then departed and travelled many miles until he reached the sea. Here he halted, and transformed himself into a piece of rock ; then into a small bush, that grows out of the rock ; and finally he threw himself into the sea. Here he was gently washed to and fro until he became a small fish ; then a larger species, until eventually he felt equal to going out into the open sea. Meeting a number of other fishes, he inquired of them as to the health of their chief, and learned, with well simulated sorrow and regret, that he was seriously ill. Later in the day he heard

that the chief, whose name was "Sinewenece," was much worse, and it was feared he would die. In the course of conversation with the other fishes he said, "I should very much like to visit Sinewenece, will you take me to him?" Every fish was willing to act as guide, and the sorcerer soon found himself in the presence of the great chief of fishes. He made many inquiries as to the cause of the malady, and found there was a large fish-hook firmly fixed in Sinewenece's throat. After having obtained permission to try his skill, he at once extracted the hook, and made off with it as quickly as possible. The chief, now that the obstruction in his throat was removed, felt greatly relieved, and in his gratitude to his clever surgeon determined to confer some great honour upon him; but to his disappointment he found that he had vanished.

In the meantime the "wise man" Xetiwon lost no time in reaching shallow water, and putting himself through the various necessary changes until he again assumed the form of man; after which he hurried through the bush, and laid the hook in the hands of the delighted Zazang; then with a sense of gratified pride he quietly sat down and ate his well-earned itra.

Spears for fishing were made by simply tying several pieces of pointed hard wood or skewers, symmetrically arranged, to the end of a long pole. Sometimes these spears were thrown at the fish; but oftener the fisherman leapt with them from the rocks, and thus gave more weight in pinning down a large fish, or catching a number of smaller ones between the prongs. The natives were so expert in the use of these spears that they rarely missed their aim.



SPEARING FISH.

Some of the methods of fishing were very original, especially the one of catching the shark. It had been observed that these fish rested with their heads inside the holes of the rocks, occasionally leaving their tails exposed. Through the calm clear water these tails were easily discerned by men above, rowing about in their canoes. Sometimes one of the men would dive into the water, making as little disturbance as possible, and would slip the end of a noosed rope round the shark's tail, at the same time signalling to his friends in the canoe to haul away at their end of the rope.

One of our pastors was sailing down the beautiful lagoon at Uvea with my husband when he related this little incident. He said that he and his friend recently went out in a boat to visit their fish baskets (thingit), in the hope of getting some fish for their evening meal. One of the baskets was in rather deep water, and they found it was impossible to haul it up, because a shark had got its head wedged in the entrance of the fish-trap and was unable to release itself. The pastor offered to go down, taking with him a noosed rope. This he fixed over the shark's tail, and then gave the rope a pull, as a signal to his friend that he had finished, and he himself began to ascend. Judge of his dismay when he found the shark also was ascending, and was spinning round and round him in the water. He expected every moment to feel its teeth in his flesh, but evidently the shark had other thoughts to occupy its mind, and the pastor escaped with nothing worse than a terrible fright.

White is supposed to be the shark's favourite colour, and all natives, swimming out in deep water, took the precaution of binding something dark over the soles of their feet; which, as everyone knows,

with the palms of their hands, are much lighter than the rest of their body. It seems always to have been an article of their faith, too, that no shark would attack a *good* man; but as every man knew his own heart, none cared to run any risks.

Occasionally a shark and a native met face to face, and a fierce struggle was the result. One of our Lifuan men has had more than one conflict of this kind. Not that he is worse than his brethren, but rather that he believes in holding fast to the prey he has laboured so hard to obtain. It is said that on one occasion an Uvean was swimming in deep water for line fishing, when seeing a shark approach, just as he was unhooking a fish he had just caught, he hurriedly placed the fish between his teeth, so as to leave his hands free, then had a battle royal with his enemy, as to who should have the disputed quarry. Needless to say the shark won, and also taught his opponent a lesson that he will not easily forget, neither will his friends whenever they look upon the scar on his face made by the shark in snatching the fish from his mouth. Sharks were sometimes caught by spearing, but no man cared to tackle a monster single-handed.

Another method of fishing was by stupefying the fish by means of a poisonous bark called "jiji." The men beat the bark until it was almost like pulp; then each member of the fishing party dived with a handful of this and placed it in the small holes and crevices of the coral rocks; after which they ascended to the canoe. After waiting there for a little time, they dived again, and easily caught the fish (which were more or less stupefied) with their hands.

The Uveans sometimes dived along the edge of the reef, putting their hands into all likely holes and

crevices in search of the unwary inhabitants. Occasionally they paid dearly for their rashness—the eels, and other angry fish, resented this intrusion by tearing the flesh of the fisherman's hand. Many serious cases of fish bites and stings have been brought to us, but none, I think, so bad as those made by the punctures of the poisonous sting-ray (e).

The bone from the tail of this fish was supposed to cause death to any person whose body it pierced ; and because of this it was often attached to the points of their fighting spears.

An old custom on Uvea, and one which still exists, was to take the young of certain species of fish and place them in large fresh-water holes, where they grew to a great size. They are very delicious fish, and approach, in flavour, nearer to fresh salmon than any other I have ever tasted in the South Seas. The natives declare they all know their own fish in these inland preserves—that is, the fish they themselves have placed in the fresh water ; and they respect each other's rights.

My husband once went to shoot some of these fish. As he stood, with his guide, by the side of one of these pools, he saw a large fish coming nearer. He at once raised his gun to shoot, when his native companion excitedly cried out, “ Don't shoot *that* fish, that is a Roman Catholic fish.” Instantly the gun was lowered and my husband turned in astonishment to his guide and said, “ What do you mean ? ” “ Oh,” said the guide, “ that fish belongs to a man who is a Roman Catholic, he might not like you to have it ; but,” cried he, as another large fish came in sight, “ you may shoot that, because it belongs to one of your own people.”

Uveans were more enthusiastic fishermen than the Lifuans ; but who would not be enamoured of the gentle art with free access to a broad and calm lagoon teeming with so many varieties of fish !

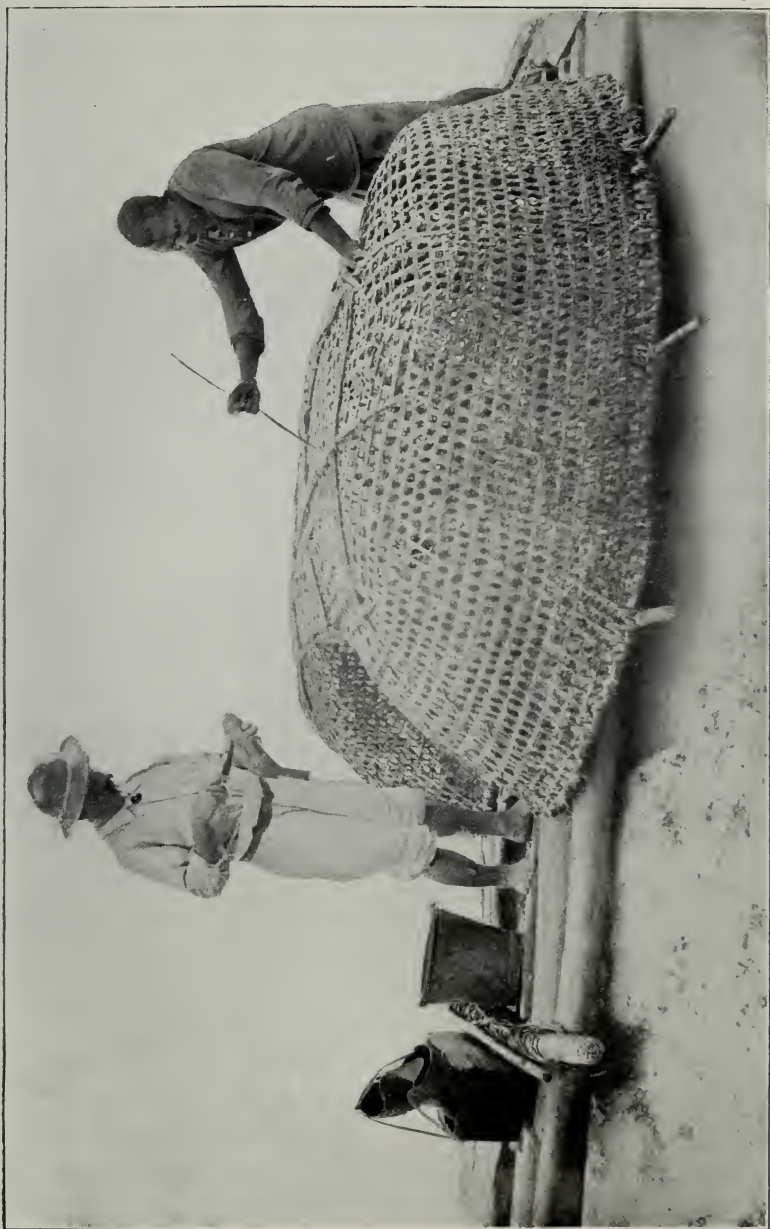
On fine evenings the men often spent the whole night on the water, about five or six miles from land, returning next morning with a good supply of snappers, rock cod, and young sharks.

Every man marked his own fish by biting off a piece of the fish in some particular part, or even by leaving the marks of his teeth.

The bait (*maja*) for these expeditions was usually provided by the women. It consisted of octopus (*iute*), shell-fish, or worms. For catching small fish a preparation was made from the ink bag of the cuttle-fish (*sitesi*). This bag was hung up in the native house until quite dry, after which it was mixed with the juice of the sugar-cane, wrapped in leaves, and again left. Not only was this an excellent bait, but it could be preserved indefinitely, and so was ready for use on any emergency.

One good method of obtaining the octopus (*iute*) for bait calls for special remark. A rough imitation of a rat was made from a piece of cowry shell, a stone, and a few dried leaves. This was dangled in front of the hole in the rocks where the octopus was thought to be hiding. The octopus has long been the sworn enemy of the rat, and whenever he saw this decoy rat, he rushed out of his hole and seized his foe, when he was immediately hauled in by eager hands above. This bitter feeling between the rat and the octopus is said to have existed for many generations, and the following story explains the real cause of the antipathy. A Lifuan rat and bird were on very

good terms with each other. In chatting together one day, the bird began to dilate on the abundance and excellence of the food on New Caledonia. He described everything in such glowing colours that the rat became dissatisfied with his lot. He longed to cross the ocean and test for himself the quality of the yams, sugar-cane, bananas, etc., of which he had heard so much. But alas! the distance was too great; he could not possibly swim sixty miles. The bird, seeing his restlessness, offered to take him on his back and fly with him to the mainland, an offer the rat readily accepted. He found New Caledonia a fair and good land, all that could be desired. The two lived very happily together until the bird unfortunately got snared, and then the rat, in his loneliness, began to realise that food alone, good and plentiful though it might be, could not ensure a life of happiness. Whilst he grieved for the loss of his friend, his thoughts turned homewards to his relations and friends on Lifu. He often went down to the beach and gazed disconsolately over the water. An octopus seeing him thus sad and depressed inquired the cause of his sorrow, and the rat poured out his melancholy story. When he had concluded his lamentations the octopus said, "I think I can be of some service to you; if you will get on my back I will swim with you to Lifu." (Now at this period the octopus had a round and rather bald head, and the rat had not yet developed a tail.) The offer was gratefully accepted, and the rat seated himself on the octopus's back and away they went. After travelling along for some time, the octopus put his smooth, shiny head above water, and this so amused the rat that he shook with laughter. The



FISH TRAP.
Thingit on a native raft.

octopus, toiling along under his heavy burden, inquired as to the cause of his mirth. The rat, fully realising his precarious position, answered, "I am laughing because I can see the tops of the coconut trees at Lifu." This was rather encouraging for the octopus, and he pressed on with renewed energy. A second time his head appeared above the surface of the water, and again the rat laughed, this time declaring that he was overjoyed to see the rocks at Lifu. In due time the two landed on a sandy beach on the Lifuan coast; and as they stood discussing the situation the rat said, "When we were out at sea, I was not laughing because I could see the trees and rocks at Lifu, but because, whenever your round head appeared above water, it looked so ridiculously bald and shiny." The octopus, hurt and angry at such ingratitude, turned on his friend with great fury, and a quarrel ensued. The rat struck the octopus on the head with a stone, and the poor fish has had a swelled head ever since. The octopus, failing to find another stone, flung a piece of stick after the rat, which stuck in his hindquarters; and to this day the rat has had to bear about with him an inconvenient tail. The feud still continues, and that is the reason that the octopus rushes out on his enemy whenever he sees him in the vicinity of his hiding-place. (I have been told that a story similar to this is current in other islands of the South Seas.)

Fish baskets or traps called "thingit"—very much like our own lobster pots—were used, baited with leaves from the papaw or other trees. The success of these baskets was supposed to depend on the exact spot in which they were placed.



They used fish baskets very much like our lobster-pots. The white man is Dr. Willie, of Cambridge, searching for Nautilus eggs.

In locating this trap, the fisherman followed a line of sand stretching from the rocks some distance into the sea. He paddled his canoe until the streak of sand began to disappear, and a few rocks came into sight, and *there* was the spot on which to place the basket. To locate it nearer the coast or farther out to sea would have been labour in vain.

A calabash was sometimes attached to a line with baited hooks and thrown out to sea, the calabash serving the purpose of a float.

In the case of one particular kind of fish the Uveans used oratory instead of bait. I have seen a shoal of about sixty large fish caught, as everyone assured me, by the persuasive arguments of one of their fishermen. The circumstance and method were as follows. An Uvean walking along the sandy beach noticed a number of small objects bobbing about on the surface of the water, some distance from land. He pointed them out to a friend, who at once became greatly excited and exclaimed: "I know something about these fish; let us get a canoe as quickly as possible." They were soon afloat, and paddled into the midst of a shoal of bottle-nosed porpoises. "Now," said he, "do just what I tell you, and we will capture the lot. Paddle gently and slowly towards the shore, whilst I harangue the fish." Then, standing up in the canoe, with many vehement gestures and persuasive native oratory he addressed the fish as follows: "Oh fish, I am truly delighted to see you, and I sincerely hope you are coming to pay a visit to our island. If you intend to come ashore, you can't find a better place than this. There are many big chiefs living here. This is the home of Dauma,

Nikelo, Beka—truly great men, who rule many subjects and possess numerous coconut trees. I beseech you come ashore here.” Then, aside to the oarsman, “Paddle very very gently towards the shore.” The fish, being persuaded by such eloquence, began to swim with the canoe until they reached rather shallow water. Not for a moment had the orator stopped his harangue, but now he turned to his friend, saying, “Do you see that small fish in the midst of the others? That is their king. Jump into the water, and throw him into the canoe.” This was no sooner done than a great tumult arose amongst the other fishes. They darted to and fro in search of their little one; many, in their excitement, stranded themselves on the sandy beach; whilst others were washed back into the shallow water. These at once made off seaward, and the men thought they had lost them; but back they soon rushed, and stranded themselves as the others had done. The men lost no time in dragging them to higher and drier ground.

A shoal has since been caught in exactly the same way at the north of Uvea; and I believe this also happens at times on the neighbouring islands of the New Hebrides. There is, no doubt, some explanation of this extraordinary fact, but we cannot fathom it.

Turtles caught at Lifu were the perquisites of the big chiefs. At Uvea all large fishes had to be handed over to his royal highness. Woe be to any man who infringed this law! because, however secretly it was done, everyone believed that his body would become distended to such an enormous extent that finally it would burst. But this restriction pressed heavily on the people, and any excuse would have been good enough to evade it, had not the penalty

been so severe. One little man of my acquaintance has the reputation of having, to some extent, evaded this irksome law. Once, when he was fishing, after much toil and struggle, he landed a huge rock cod—a fish noted for its enormous mouth and throat. Alas ! it was *too* large to please him ; if it had been smaller he might have kept it, but it was of the regulation size for the chief's itra. The little man longed for a taste of fish, and this one had given him much labour in landing it ; but the law must be kept, or he must pay the penalty. Long and sadly he meditated by the side of his spoil ; then a brilliant idea occurred to him. Calling to a friend to come near, he showed him the fish, at the same time reminding him of the law. “ But,” said the little man, “ nothing has ever been said about the small fishes inside the big one's stomach. This is my plan : I will go down the fish's throat, and get all I can ; when I wriggle my legs about, you seize hold of them, and haul me out, and we will share the spoil.” The trick was most successful ; each man got a fair number of fish, the large one was presented intact to the chief, and the letter of the law was duly observed.

Naturally there was a great deal of superstition connected with fishing. It was a bad omen to offer to carry a fisherman's bag, to pretend to go with him, or to inquire as to the time of his return ; for all these things brought ill-luck, and probably an empty basket.

At certain times of the year, shoals of young mackerel (wanacim) come quite close to the rocks at Lifu. Raw crab and coconut were chewed and spat into the water to keep the silver visitors about, and

great sport was the order of the day. Sometimes there was much disappointment also, for none might put in his line before the chief, and he, either to show his power or for some other reason, sometimes remained quietly in his house for so long that the shoal of fish left for another part of the island. After handling these fish, it was necessary to wash your hands before touching your hair, otherwise, say the Lifuans, you will become prematurely grey.

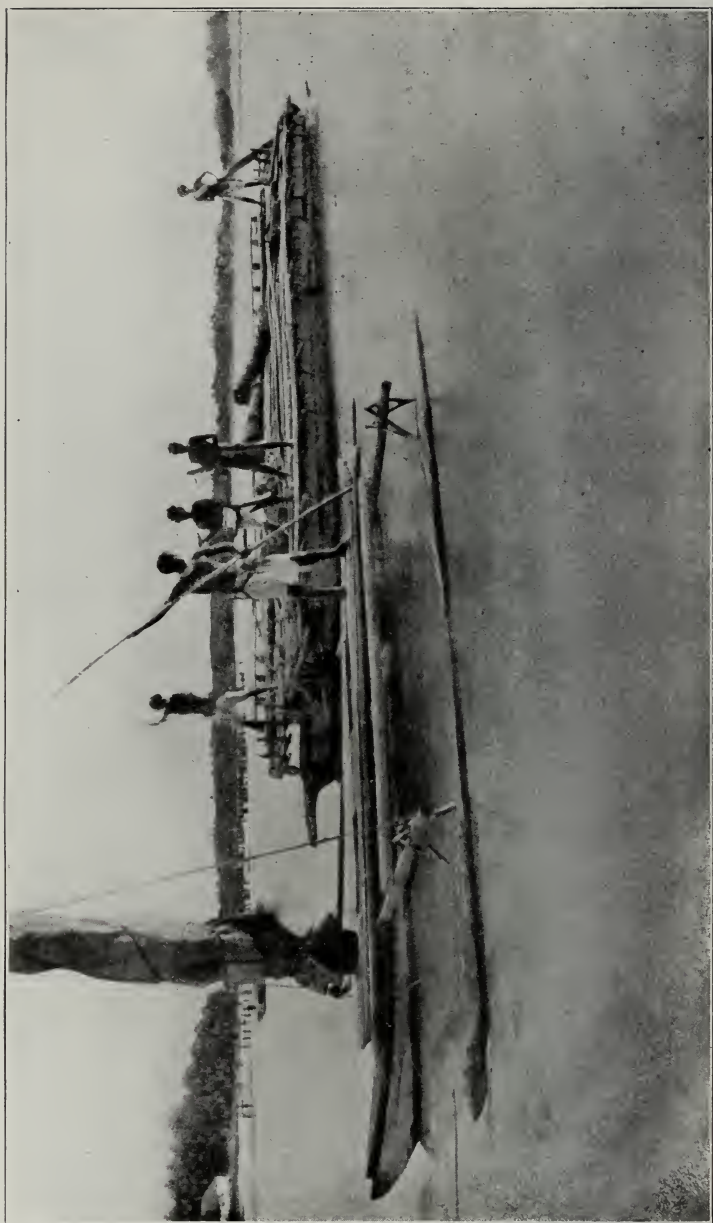
Another species of small fish also visits these coasts, and usually remains for a considerable time; their reluctance to leave being attributed to the fact that they believe some being has stolen their fetish and hidden it on shore.

It is said that when young turtles come from their eggs the mother is always somewhere near, waiting for them; and no sooner are they hatched than they leave their warm, sandy bed and make for the water in search of her. Those who arrive on her left side she at once devours; but she bestows a hearty welcome, and much maternal care, on those who arrive on her right.

Great ingenuity was displayed by these islanders in building canoes. We find here a further illustration of what man can do without the aid of elaborate tools.

A well-constructed canoe could make as much progress through the water as most European boats; and when under sail, and in a strong breeze, could leave an old time steamer in the rear.

In constructing these picturesque little craft much time and patience were needed. The only available tool was a small stone axe (ze); and even this had to be made by the canoe-maker himself. It was generally manufactured from a rough piece of jade



SINGLE AND DOUBLE CANOES AT UVEA.

or other hard stone, by being rubbed to the desired shape and size. It was then lashed with twine—also made by the workman—to a rough handle, in which a socket had been made for its reception.

The adzes were of much the same shape, except that



STONE AXES USED IN CANOE-MAKING, ETC.

the mountings varied, light or heavy, according to the needs of the workman.

After securing a good axe, the next thing to be done was to find a suitable tree of hard wood, and this was cut down and dragged into the village in the manner I have described in house-building.

By continual burning and chipping, the tree was rounded on the outside, hollowed inside, and pointed at both ends. A simple outrigger was made and fastened to the canoe by lashings through holes made by burning. Occasionally a part of the craft was decked over, and provision was made for a triangular sail.

The sail (*sinyeu*) consisted of two or three pieces of native matting, stitched together with a needle made from the wing-bone of the flying fox. The bone was pointed at one end, and an eye was pierced through at the other. The Uveans still call all needles "*jebu*"—" *je* " meaning bone, and "*bu* " flying fox.

Many of the canoes, especially those of Uvea, had a mast fore and aft; and in order to "*'bout ship*," it was necessary to move the sails by lifting them bodily over from one side to the other, which was no light task in a strong breeze.

Lashings and wooden pegs (*epen*) held these frail barks together and the sails in their places. A large stone was used for anchor, and the bailer was either a miniature canoe or a large shell. The paddles and rudder were shaped like the paddle of a Canadian canoe, with long or short handles, and made of hard wood.

Small canoes were paddled by men sitting. On larger ones the men stood, using the sides of the canoe as the fulcrum. None ever sailed with the outrigger to the wind.

Catamarans, or rafts (*iweng*), were handled with great skill; every man was an adept at sculling, either with a long pole or a single oar.

Canoes were sometimes ornamented with crude

designs burnt into the wood and rows of white cowry shells.

Every canoe was the property of the chief, as well as of the man who made it.

There were great rejoicings when one of these vessels was launched. Men and boys appeared in all their war-paint. At a given signal, the whole mob assumed a belligerent attitude, and with wild yells and shouts they brandished their clubs and spears, rushing at the canoe as though they would smash it to atoms. All this was to show the owner of the canoe that they were full of enthusiasm and gladness on his account, that such a difficult and arduous task was accomplished and to congratulate him on his success.

Some months ago, when on a short visit to Uvea, I looked in vain for the picturesque little canoes sailing up and down the lagoon. Alas ! not one was to be seen ; they have all been superseded by the white man's boat, which is built, so the natives say, on a model suggested by the ribs and breast of a common barnyard fowl.

CHAPTER VI

NAVIGATION—ASTRONOMY

WITH such simple sailing craft as I have described in the previous chapter, one may readily believe that the Loyalty Islanders were by no means great travellers, and that their knowledge of navigation was very limited.

I have heard that the people of one of our villages once possessed a unique method of crossing the sea to New Caledonia.

They assembled together on the beach, and at a signal given by one named "Ate Onat" everyone closed his eyes and remained perfectly quiet for two or three hours. At a second signal, every eye was opened; and behold, the people found themselves landed on the mainland of New Caledonia, thus escaping the dangers and miseries of a sea voyage. But the charm was broken—broken through a woman's curiosity; she was a stranger, and she opened her eyes before the signal was given, just to see what was going on; and ever since the people have been obliged to cross the sea in the ordinary way.

The Loyalty Islanders frequently visited the neighbouring islands of the group, and occasionally New Caledonia—a radius of thirty to sixty miles.

Whenever they made what to them were long journeys, they were always mindful to take with them a certain stone fetish (mekene he), which, they said, was able to show a light on dark nights, to pilot the canoe, and even to cause it to continue under way whenever the wind failed them.

Unfortunately, however, this fetish sometimes



CORAL FORMATION. LIFU COAST.

turned rebellious, and refused to exert its power according to the desires of the crew. The sailors, knowing this, provided themselves with a stout stick having certain medicinal properties, and with this they chastised the poor fetish until it was brought to a proper frame of mind.

If all went well on the double journey, the owner of the fetish generally received a very handsome present.

In every storm a Jonah was sought, and generally found; for the natives readily confessed their sins whenever they thought their lives were in danger.

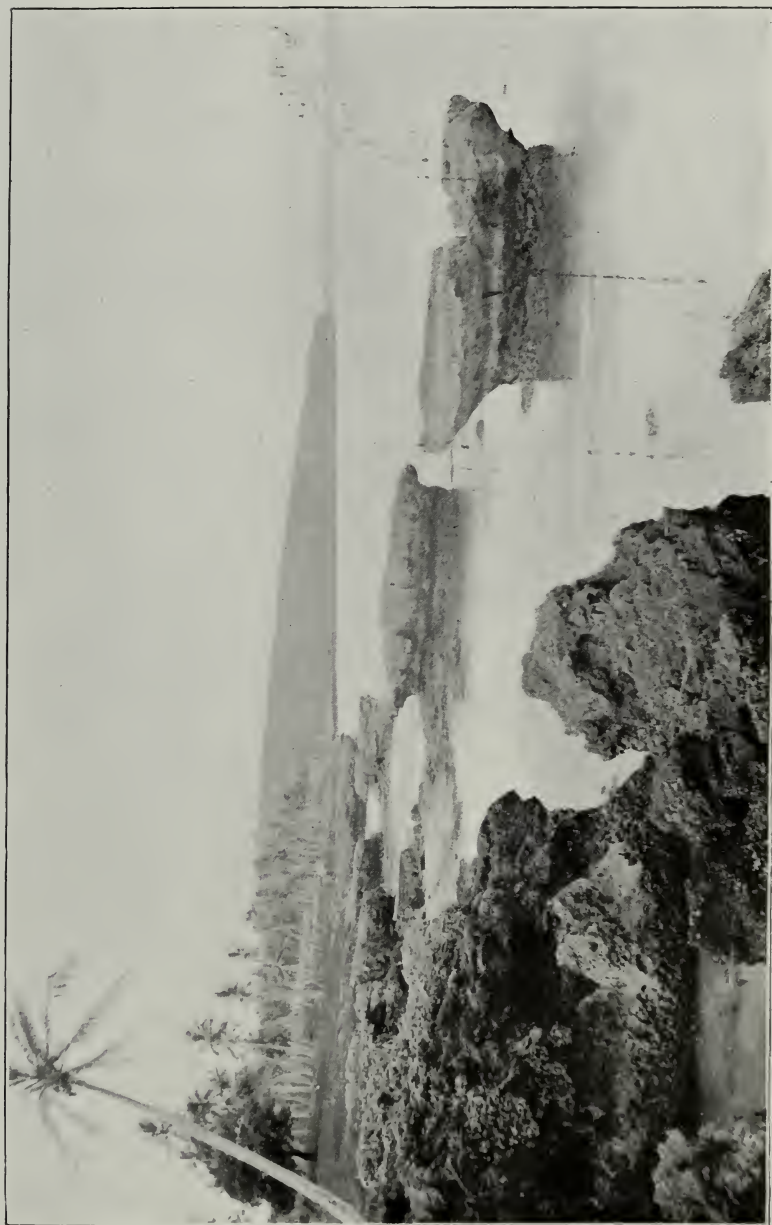
The Lifuans knew of no world beyond their own island until, as they say, one of their own men fished up a few new countries from the depths of the sea. It happened in this way:

A Lifuan was fishing in the ordinary way from the rocks, and threw out his line towards the west. Feeling something on his hook, he began to haul in. He thought he had caught an unusually big fish, but found he had pulled up an island—the island of Uvea, which is about thirty miles away. (To the present day whenever Lifuans go to Uvea in their boats they like to start from the spot on which the man stood, and closely follow the directions of his line.)

Again the fisherman threw out his line—this time in an easterly direction, and pulled up the island of Maré; a third time he brought up the large island of New Caledonia, which is about 260 miles long, 45 miles across, and about 60 miles from Lifu.

The fourth attempt failed, and finally the line broke, which indicates that the Lifuans knew nothing of the New Hebrides or places beyond; and when they saw foreign vessels coming from the north, they were filled with wonder and amazement and said, “Surely these people must come from the clouds,” and at once gave them the name “ate Papali”—men from the clouds; a name by which all white men are still known.

To the mind of a Lifuan, the horizon (ifengon) was a tangible object at no great distance. Many of the natives thought that if they could only reach it they would be able to climb up to the sky. It is said that a



BEACH AT LIU

party once started off from one of the inland villages with this object in view. They met with many obstacles. They were obliged to cut paths for themselves through the tangled vines, thick bushes, and undergrowth of the forest. Whenever one of the party climbed a high tree to reconnoitre, he invariably reported that the horizon was still some distance away. They were not wanting in perseverance, however, so pressed on until they reached the sea-coast. Alas! for their hopes and plans—the horizon was still far away; besides, between them and the goal of their ambition rolled the great blue sea. The enterprise, undertaken with such zeal, had to be abandoned; the people were obliged to return to their homes and give up all thoughts of reaching the heaven on which their hopes were fixed.

As a rule, the people travelled little about their own island. I am told that one of the Lifuan chiefs (named Haiweng) and his friend were wandering about in the bush when they came across a man who regarded them with speechless surprise and awe. This man belonged to a small community of people who lived together in the interior of the island, and supposed themselves to be the sole inhabitants of the whole world. After a while the startled creature invited the two chiefs to go with him to his village, which he said was called “Atingen.” The two visitors found the people living in miserable hovels, for they knew neither how to build houses nor to cultivate vegetables. They had, however, the instinct of hospitality. They set about placing the best food they could supply before their guests; but when the two men sat down to eat, their stomachs rebelled, for they saw in front of them worms, lizards,

wood-lice and other insects, all of which were most objectionable to them. The hosts were angry at this slight upon their food, and declared the two men could not possibly be chiefs, or they would surely know how very toothsome were such delicacies. They demanded to know from whence they came, and some of the "Atingenites" declared their intention of accompanying them back, to prove the truth of their statement; but when they arrived at the larger village of Josip, and saw crowds of strange faces gathering about them, and the blue sea stretching miles and miles before them, they were so terrified that they fell on their faces, and tried to shut out all the awe-inspiring sights. The name "Atingen" has since become a word of reproach or ridicule for persons who are unusually dull or stupid.

The Loyalty Islanders greatly enjoyed sitting outside their huts in the cool evening air talking and discussing current events.

Naturally they noticed and formed their own opinions about the stars and planets. They grouped them into imaginary figures and gave them suitable names.

The *Pleiades* suggested to their minds a string of small yams, and so they received the name "Fini-koko"—"Fini," a threaded string; "koko," a yam. Another similar group was a string of odds and ends, called "Fini-wanyilanyil."

Venus was called "Foe trew"—"wife of the moon," on her evening appearance. In the morning she was called "Watesith atralia"—"sign of dawn."

The *Southern Cross* suggested to them pulling up an anchor, and was called "Fiki-nahun"—"fiki," to pull up; "nahun," an anchor. This idea is rather

a strange one, coming from a native, seeing that the anchors used in the islands were large stones, whereas the three points of the Southern Cross suggest the shape of an English anchor.

In the *Milky Way* the Lifuans recognised the form of two islands—"Lue hnapet," and they also observed that these lay pointing towards the Isle of Pines, near New Caledonia; so whenever these stars were unusually bright, the Lifuans said that the people on the Isle of Pines had finished preparing their evening meal.

Orion's Belt was simply "a cord," or string—"Canewahne."

The people were filled with awe and wonder at the power and magnificence of the sun (jo), moon (teu), and stars (watesy). They felt they ought to propitiate them in some way, but as they were too far off to receive presents, the only thing the natives could think of was to kneel and bow before them in perfect silence.

They could never fathom the mystery of the appearance and disappearance of the stars; they came to the conclusion that the sun and moon travelled along a path underground—a path reserved for them alone, upon which human eye must never gaze.

They said the sun reached old age in one month, but owing to some secret and special attribute was enabled to renew his youth.

The moon, not being possessed of this power, ran its full course in one month, after which a literally new moon arose and took its place.

It seems to have been the general opinion that the moon possessed an unlimited supply of teeth (inyö) to dispose of; so that whenever a man pulled out a

decayed tooth he was mindful to throw it over his house, on a moonlight night, calling out at the same time to the moon, "Here is my old tooth, take it away, and send me a new one in its place." A friend of mine gravely told me that the moon did not always grant their desires. She had herself followed all the prescribed rules most minutely, but no new tooth had taken the place of the old one.

Among the common ailments of the natives there is one which affects the eyes in the form of spots or blemishes. To remedy this defect, the patient mixed together certain medicinal ingredients, and laying these on his big toe, just as the moon was sinking, he cried out, "Go down, moon, and may the blemishes on my eyes go with you."

Children were taught to spit on the ground whenever they saw a falling star, in order to ensure the continuance of their mother's life.

The sun, the wind, and the rain were all more or less under the control of certain sorcerers who were easily prevailed upon, by a gift of food, to use their power and skill. There were two or three rain-makers in different parts of the island. It was their custom to preserve a certain spot of ground as sacred, on which neither bush nor grass was ever allowed to be pulled up or burnt.

Whenever the rain-maker felt inclined to show his power, he threw into this sacred virgin patch a piece of a wild vine called "Utrim"; after which the clouds formed, and the rain fell. These sacred plots of land still remain undisturbed; and although the rain-maker and his descendants have no longer the power of former days, yet a halo of past glory seems to hover about them, and they are ranked as

small chiefs and treated with great respect and honour.

In olden times a keen spirit of emulation and jealousy prevailed between the "wise men" who ruled the rain and the one who ruled the sun, although their power, for good or evil, was supposed to be about equal.

The natives themselves looked with great favour upon the rain-makers, but to him who controlled the sun whose oppressive heat caused them so much discomfort and fatigue, and even burnt up their plantations, they were ever ready to impute all kinds of evil motives. They even insinuated sometimes that he was trying to cause a famine in the land, so that many people would die of hunger, and thus there would be more human flesh for food—it was one of the prerogatives of this functionary to proclaim a cannibal feast whenever he wished to do so. There were, however, certain rules and conditions to be observed by him, which, one would think, would militate against a too frequent repetition of these disgusting orgies. For example, he would be obliged to sacrifice his own eldest son. This, the first victim, he would be obliged to have cut into a number of parts, corresponding with the number of districts in his chief's dominion; each portion would then be dispatched by a special envoy (maca) accompanied by the following message: "This is part of the body of my own son." It was then understood that the people were free to slay and eat each other.

The Lifuans have a very poetical manner of expressing some of the common changes of the weather and other natural phenomena. Thus, when the wind blows over the surface of the water, they

say that it is having a bath. The falling of soft, gentle rain is described as “the crying of an infant.”

An *eclipse* (jid “*night*”) of the sun or moon caused great consternation among the people, for it was regarded as an infallible sign that one of their big chiefs was being called away to the spirit world. (I do not think that this belief is general at the present time. On one occasion we were disturbed at a late hour by a man who, seeming rather afraid and excited, told us that the moon was dead. We went outside and found there was a total eclipse. Many of the poor natives thought the end of the world had come, and all, I think, were relieved when the moon reappeared.)

A *rainbow* (lewen) was considered quite harmless, unless it appeared too frequently; then, indeed, it might be a harbinger either of a famine or a hurricane. A fact that lends a little colour to this idea is that the rainy season is also the time when there is generally a shortness of food; it is also the time of destructive hurricanes. Children were strictly forbidden to point at a rainbow, lest by so doing they should cause the death of their mother, as in the case of a falling star.

The Lifuans always maintained that there was a large cavern underground, which was the home of innumerable devils. These devils sometimes became very angry and jealous, and did their utmost to cause a famine amongst the people who lived on the land above them. They tore at the growing yams in the native plantations with so much force and energy that they shook the whole island, causing an *earthquake*.

These same demons had also power over thunder (hedring) and lightning (samek). The latter was not to

be feared; but oh! the terror of thunder, which the Uveans call "the voice of the great chief." Great and powerful as he was, he was very easily offended. He strongly objected to the natives burning banana skins and the skins of certain other fruits. Sometimes for this small offence he would burn down a man's house.

Whenever Thunder was threatening, the people avoided all large trees, and even the posts inside their houses. Everyone talked about him, and told each other how he could tear up the ground with his tremendous thumb-nails. Whenever his roar was heard, the men furnished themselves with thick sticks, ready to smash his thumb-nails, should he venture inside their little huts. On inquiring whether anyone had really been fortunate enough to smash them, I was told that up to the present time the thumb-nails had never appeared *just* at the exact moment the watchers were waiting for them, otherwise . . .

The natives have also a way of accounting for the *roar* of the thunder. They say that at one time the thunder lived here upon the earth. Three friends—the crab (ixo), the snail (catei), and the locust (nengeteij)—talking together, agreed to try to obtain a light from him for making a fire. The snail made the first attempt. When he arrived at the door of Thunder's house, he met with rather a rough welcome, and a request to know where he had come from. The snail replied in gentle tones that he had come to beg Thunder to give him a little fire. To this Thunder at first demurred, but later he consented, saying, "Look out you don't burn my place."

But the snail was evidently unaccustomed to

handling fire, for he not only set Thunder's place on fire, but he himself perished in the flames.

Then the locust sent the crab to procure a fire-stick, but a similar thing happened to the crab that had happened to the snail.

After this the locust was very angry and determined to go himself. He smashed open the door of Thunder's house, and a serious quarrel ensued, in which Thunder was conquered and taken prisoner, and exiled from the earth by the locust, who hurled him upwards into the clouds. He evidently returns to the earth, for whenever thunder is heard the old women say, "That is the locust banging the thunder up into the clouds again."

Waterspouts were understood to be sheets of water being poured from the sky. They were said to be easily destroyed by striking the suspended end with a stout stick or club.

CHAPTER VII

DIVISION OF TIME AND LANGUAGES

THE Loyalty Islanders reckoned their years by the number of yam harvests they had seen, or by any striking public event. Old age was greatly honoured, and every man's ambition was to be considered older than he really was; and so the term *old* became used as a compliment, or token of respect, but formerly never as we use it as a term of affectionate familiarity ; but the natives had very little idea of their ages. I heard a white man ask a native who was of about sixty-five years what might be his age. The old man took so long to consider that the white man suggested twenty. He supposed the white man knew, and yet, wishing to appear a little older, he gravely informed us he thought he must have seen twenty-one yam harvests. He also told us that his daughter was about seven years of age, whereas she must have been at least eighteen. But time was of little account to them. The days were long and there was not much to do. The sun was the only clock they had, and although they read it very correctly, they were quite lost as to time on cloudy days. Asking an old pastor whether it was not time to ring the church bell for service, he said, " We always ring the bell when

the sun reaches a certain mark on the threshold of my house."

There were numerous special names for different parts of the day, all of which are still in use. "Hmakany sine jint" was early in the morning, whilst still dark. "Xaqane lai"—daybreak. "Pici sisi" denoted the beginning of the chirping of the



LIFUAN.

birds in the early morning. "Hmakany"—morn-
ing; "Hnaipajo hmakany"—forenoon; "Hnaipajo"—
midday; "Co la qei la jo"—early afternoon;
"Hnaipajo hej"—late afternoon; "Heje-heje"—
gloaming; "Heje"—evening; "Jint"—night;
"Nyipë jint"—midnight.

The year was also divided into sections, the names of which generally had to do with some public annual

event. Thus the month of "Satesi" indicated the time when the tribes of the district of Gaica made a grand yearly feast and invited other friendly tribes to join them. In the month of "Malam" the tribes of the district of Wét made a feast, and invited their friends.

"Iulekeu" and "Xomathipë" were months when the tribes of Lösi took their offerings of new yams to the big chief. These months probably correspond with our months of March and April. At the end of the year the people again took a huge present of *old* yams to their district chief, in the month called "Wememetra."

"Sawan" is the name of another month towards the end of the year. At this time of the year there was little work to be done on the plantation; so "Sawan" was a holiday month, when the people visited their friends. It was also the time when the people of the Wét district went in search of a particular kind of fish. They used neither trap, spear, nor bait, and yet they succeeded in securing a large number. These particular fish took shelter in the small holes in the rocks, and the man who caught the first one with his hands held it aloft, and when the people saw it they shouted with a great shout "Eeeeeehooooo." This noise so startled the fish that no more life was left in them, and the people quickly gathered them up and threw them into their native baskets.

The month "Canula" received its name from the root of a particular tree. The root was used for food, and was at its best at this time of the year.

The month "Upiona" warned the men to rouse themselves and hasten off into the bush in search of various kinds of bark with which to make their lines

and nets, so as to be ready for a certain kind of fish which was soon expected to visit their shores.

“ Ugewejë ” was a cold month—the month for preparing the stakes for digging up the ground in their new plantations.

“ To qeu ” was to clear away weeds and trees, for the starting of a new plantation, and the month “ Qeu ” was the time to do this particular work.

“ Qalewejë,” or crooked stick, was one of the hot months. After the husbandman had been digging up his garden for some time, he was glad to rest a little on his stake, after he had driven it into the ground in an inclined position ; and so often did he rest that this month has been called “ crooked stick.” (These last-named three months have also been spoken about under Agriculture.)

“ Quiela ” must be one of the early months of the year, because it denotes heavy rains and hurricanes. There was another month called “ Kejan,” but the origin or meaning of the word is not now known by even the oldest inhabitants : I doubt very much whether many of the young men and maidens know even the names of the months that were commonly employed by their forefathers. English or French names are now universally used. It is much the same in the case of numerals.

Numbers beyond ten, or rather numbers other than the multiple of twenty, were unknown. The number twenty represented one man—his fingers (iwanakoim) and his toes (iwaca) ; forty or sixty were spoken of as two or three men.

Toes were called the fingers of the foot, and very useful fingers they were too. They held the twine for plaiting and netting ; they gripped the rocks and

trees in climbing and with wonderful dexterity they picked up small articles from the ground and thus saved unnecessary stooping.

After an interval of separation the Lifuans showed great cordiality, and indulged in many demonstrations of affection on meeting their friends ; so also when a messenger arrived with good news. They clasped each other by the arms or shoulders, saying joyfully, " Ixeimë."

The orthodox way, however, was for one man to put out his hand—palm upwards—exclaiming " Ixeimë," when his friend brought his hand down upon it with a hearty smack. This was especially the case with those who called each other by the name of " Enemu," for " Enemu " meant something almost more than friend. If you took a man for your " Enemu " you gave him access to your house, your food, your goods, and undertook to stand by him in trouble. A big chief sometimes adopted a stranger as his Enemu, and no one, after that, dare harm the man, or offend him in any way.

The Lifuan language is very soft and liquid, one word running into another, making it very pleasant to the ear. Occasionally one may almost guess the meaning of a word by the way it is spoken. If the natives speak of a man as having walked a long distance they say, with a slight uplifting of the head, " Hnei nyidë hna, tro, tro, tro, tro," until the " tros " gradually die away as the distance increases.

The language is very verbose, as compared with the English, and often, after listening to a long native story, told in their dreamy, slow way, I have found it could be told in English in comparatively few words.

I have already spoken of the court, or chief's, language, which considerably increases the difficulty of the language to a stranger ; for if he is a man of any social standing he will be addressed continually in the chief's language, but when he knows something of Lifuan, he will be expected to reply in the common language.

By a strange coincidence there are a few points of similarity between the Lifuan and the French languages. For instance, the Lifuans always use the article " la " before a noun, without, however, any regard to gender. The construction of the sentence " My brother's pen-knife " would be, as in French, " The pen-knife of my brother." Again, they employ the same method as the French in expressing a negative, the " ne . . . pas " being expressed by " tha . . . kö." Their demonstrative pronouns, too, are almost identical with those of the French, being " ce " and " cela " ; the " c," however, being sounded as " ch."

One feature common to the four languages of the group is the entire absence of the verb " to be." Until one knows the language one wonders how it can be possible to dispense with its use.

The natives make frequent use of the " th " sound, which the French find difficulty in pronouncing ; on the other hand, the natives are unable to pronounce, with very few exceptions, two consonants in conjunction ; they formerly pronounced and wrote my name—Hadfield—as " Haderefil."

Although all Loyalty Islanders speak grammatically, and are most careful to sound every aspirate—including those placed in the middle of a word—many of them are very careless speakers. It is their

custom to commence a sentence, and after a few words to introduce a long "hmm" or "aah," and frequently end with, "Oh what do you call it?"

Sometimes they shorten a word or sentence, and instead of "Thate kö nie"—"I don't know"—one generally hears "thate," and not always *that*, for a sharp nod, a peculiar grimace, or a shrug of the shoulders equally expresses their meaning. "Yes" is often expressed by merely raising the eyebrows, turning up the corner of the top lip, or giving the head a sharp nod backwards.

Both Lifuans and Uveans use the inclusive and exclusive pronouns, and, in addition, the Lifuans have many ways of expressing our simple pronouns; "you," for example, gives great scope for flattery, or contempt, of which the natives are not slow in taking advantage.

The following list of second personal pronouns singular will give an idea of the ample choice of forms of address enjoyed by the Lifuans. They are written in the order of the respect or contempt which they respectively express, the first word of the list showing the highest and most dignified form of address, almost deifying the person to whom it is used; the words at the end of the list may be used either for the purpose of expressing contempt, equal to "You dog," or as terms of endearment, and are often used by a husband in addressing his wife; in which case there is probably a subtle combination of the two features:

Angenëtilai Enëtilai Angacilieti Cilietie.

Anganyipëti Nyipëti Nyipë Eö Munë Nyam.

A chief's son, when quite young, is addressed as "nyipë," and quite young children observe this etiquette. My own little son had often for his play-

mates the son of a chief and the son of a commoner, and however excited these children got in their games the son of the commoner never by any chance forgot to address the others as “nyipë,” thus recognising their social position.

Every young man is entitled to be addressed as “nyipë,” but a young woman, unless she is highly connected, is never “nyipë,” but “eö,” except she be married, and even then “nyipë” carries with it only a limited measure of compliment; it simply means that she has thrown off the freedom of girlhood and is worthy of a little more consideration. Her great ambition is to hear herself addressed as “nyipo”—“you and your offspring.”

A common difficulty is often experienced in addressing a woman of marriageable age who is a stranger. There is nothing in the form of wedding ring to indicate whether she is single or married, and if married, whether or not she has children; and yet the correct word must be used in addressing her. If she is *not* married we may speak to her as “Eö”—you, if married and no children as “nyipë,” but if she is the mother of a child, as “nyipo,” which is the dual form for “you two.”

No married woman likes to hear herself addressed as “nyipë”—“you,” alone. It is too suggestive of what she, and others, would regard as disparagement. It was some time before I discovered that I had transgressed the laws of the language by addressing, from courtesy, all married women as “nyipo,” seeing that they were so very sensitive about being called “nyipë.” I found, however, that although a woman disliked being addressed as “nyipë,” she was also greatly embarrassed by being called “nyipo.”

In my dilemma, I consulted a very intelligent native, and found, to my surprise, that the Lifuans were in exactly the same predicament as myself. A Lifuan about thirty-five years of age assured me that he was always ashamed to speak to a married woman who was childless, because he never knew which pronoun to use—"nyipë" or "nyipo," that neither he, nor she, should show, or feel, disrespect, and want of politeness.

But although the Lifuan language is so rich in pronouns in the second and third person, and has abundance of words pertaining to house-building, fishing, and gardening, it is woefully lacking in words (as indeed one might expect) which are expressive of mental, moral, and social ideas. "Ihnim" is the word generally used for "love," and is nearly akin to the English word "charity." A gift of any kind, or a kind action, is called "ihnim." But to love a person, or to feel an affection for him, is to "*hni*" him; the word "*hni*" meaning the belly, or abdomen, employed as a verb.

The natives had no idea of attributing thought to the brain; beyond the fact that it formed a part of the stuffing of the skull, it had no special function. The heart was to them the only seat of knowledge and thought.

A Lifuan always says "*olea*"—"thank you" for any good news, as well as for a gift; "*olea*" means "I am glad," or "I rejoice with you."

Occasionally a man brought me a little present from his wife, who lived some miles away, and as he offered it to me he said, "My wife's salutations to you and she has sent you her fingers." Then, before

he returned, I sent my salutations to his wife, I “olea ” to her for her present to me, and (offering a little packet) “ here are my fingers to her.”

When the natives are weary of anything they express themselves as being *dead* of it.

Although Uvea is the smallest of the three islands of the group, being about thirty miles long by three or four miles broad, there are two different languages spoken there.

The original tongue was evidently that known as the Iaian. Tradition says, and it is probably correct in asserting, that the tribes living at the extreme north and south of the island are aliens, presumably from Wallis Island—according to legend already mentioned—and these still speak their own language ; whilst those in the centre of the island are the real aborigines, or Iaians, intermixed with New Caledonians. The Iaian, or pure Uvean, is supposed to be a very difficult language for foreigners to acquire ; and, indeed, apart from the missionaries, I know of only one white man who has ever been able to speak it. It is decidedly harsh and uncouth, and requires a large, flexible mouth to give it its correct pronunciation and expression.

The Uveans do not seem to have had the same exalted ideas of rank and chieftainship as the Lifuans. They have one pronoun only for the second person, so that in this respect the difficulty of acquiring the language is not great. Still it *is* in the pronouns that one of the difficulties of the language is to be found, namely, in the possessive pronouns. These are continually changing, according to the noun which they qualify, as well as according to

the nature of the noun to which they belong. For instance :

First Person.			Second Person.		
Anyik	tusi	... My book.	Anyâm	tusi	... Thy book.
Umok	uma	... My house.	Umâm	uma	... Thy house.
Alek	pin	... My dove.	Alem	pin	... Thy dove.
Urtok	ert	... My net.	Urtâm	ert	... Thy net.
Ik	hneyi	... My garden.	Im	hneyi	... Thy garden.

In the case of substantives having some relation to the person, the possessive pronoun takes the form of a suffix to the noun, thus :

Benyik	...	...	My arm.	Benyâm	...	...	Thy arm.
Cak	...	...	My foot.	Cam	...	...	Thy foot.
Bok	...	...	My head.	Bâm	...	...	Thy head.

and so on through the three persons singular, plural, and dual. There is also an interesting feature, common to both Lifuans and Uveans, namely, the employment of exclusive and inclusive pronouns in the dual and plural. Thus the dual form of "our book" would be "anyimu tusi" if intended to indicate that the person was *not* one of the two who possessed the book ; but, "anyitu tusi" would include the person addressed, as "yours and mine."

CHAPTER VIII

AMUSEMENTS—SWIMMING, GAMES, PERSONAL ADORNMENTS, DANCING, MUSIC

ALTHOUGH the Loyalty Islanders had so much time at their disposal, they had very few games with which to amuse themselves. The sea, which was generally so delightfully warm and smooth, was the public playground. Mothers took their little ones for a sea bath long before they could walk. They gave them several duckings, then put them in a place of safety, often within reach of the gentle waves ; and off they went themselves, plunging, diving and swimming like so many porpoises. They imitated the antics of this large fish remarkably well by keeping the body under water for some time, showing alternately the head and shoulders, then the rest of the body. The thought never seemed to occur to anyone to teach the children to swim ; the little ones learnt it at a very early age, as naturally as they learnt walking.

The popular style of swimming was that known as “ hand over hand ” ; everybody was able to cut through the water at a great speed. The natives dived feet first ; never head first, probably owing to danger of sunken rocks, or possibly because the idea never occurred to them to do otherwise.

Surf swimming was a popular pastime, especially

if the swimmer could obtain a flat piece of wood on which to rest the arms and chest. First he swam out to sea for a considerable distance, and was then carried back on the top of an unusually large wave, expertly diving and returning for another ride as soon as the danger point had been reached. The smooth, sandy beach was of course comparatively safe, but on the rocky coasts great danger was encountered and greater skill required, but the swimmer rarely suffered any serious injury.

Sometimes men swam out considerable distances from the land for line fishing, taking no other precaution than the one already mentioned, of covering the white parts of the hands and feet to keep off the sharks.

Many are the wonderful stories told of their great powers of endurance in the water. We hear of one man going from Lifu to Uvea (thirty or forty miles), carrying his food under his arms, in the form of unhusked coconuts.

We hear of a woman swimming from one of the smaller islands to Lifu—about twelve miles—in search of fire, and returning with a live fire-stick in her mouth.

There was a game of ball commonly played in the water by the children. The balls were made from leaves, and batted from one to the other with their hands, whilst treading water the whole time.

The children also played “hide and seek” in the water. A number of them formed a ring, and all splashed the water into foam with their hands; then suddenly one dived, and swam away under cover of the foam, the rest going in search of him and trying to catch him.

The men and boys amused themselves on land by throwing hoops and spears at a target.

Another game, the danger of which added great zest to it, was something like our old-fashioned snow-balling. Sand, however, took the place of snow, and a sand-ball sometimes had a stone in the middle. The practice of dodging these made the natives expert



PLAYING CAT'S CRADLE.

in avoiding spears and other missiles in the more serious experiences of warfare.

The children had little windmills made from plaited leaves, also little spinning tops made from small cone-shells, which continued to spin for some time, when spun by expert fingers.

They also made several forms of "cat's cradle" with twine or small vines. One was called "Fiki-halo"—"pulling up the halo root." The game origi-

nated as follows. A chief and his men went into the bush in search of a certain root called "halo." They found one root so firmly embedded in the ground that their united forces could not uproot it. A small boy of the party, by some trick of his own invention, succeeded where the others had failed. The children



PLAYING CAT'S CRADLE.

consider that they explain his method quite clearly when they show you how to crochet a piece of twine over the four fingers and the thumb. No amount of pulling will loosen the string, but slip it from the thumb, and herein lay the trick, then pull one end, and the whole string is liberated.

Other tricks with twine represent a water-hole, a star, and a fish or crab trying to hide in the sand ;

these were all played by one person on the fingers and toes ; but there were others which required two people, such as finding a hidden shell, or destroying a bird's nest.

On one occasion I saw some little girls playing around a smooth white patch of sand. One of them smoothed the sand, then with two fingers she scooped



TICKLING THE BABY—ONE RAT'S FOOT, TWO RATS' FEET.

out a number of small holes, hissing gently the whole time. A second girl filled up the holes, and she too kept up the hissing noise as long as possible. I watched the game for some time without discovering the meaning of it ; but they explained that the winner was the one who filled up, or emptied, the most holes without drawing breath—the duration of the breath being indicated by the hissing noise.

Nurses amused the babies by laying them flat on

their backs, and then, with the fingers of both hands creeping slowly up the little naked body, chanting, in a monotonous voice, "One rat's foot, two rat's feet, three rat's feet," etc., increasing in speed as the fingers got higher, until, the little one laughing at being tickled under the chin, the rat was supposed to jump into the open mouth and run down the throat.

Everyone loved music, dancing, and singing. Their tunes were mostly in the minor key, and to European ears sounded very sad and melancholy.

A peculiarity about these tunes was that no white man on the island, to my knowledge, was ever able to reproduce them.

Most of our students knew the tonic sol-fa method of singing, and one or two of them have tried to write out for me some of the most popular choruses, which are as follows :

FEHOA.

NYINEU A TRO (*Why go*).

KEY C.

s ₁	d : — : d.d	d.d : r : —	d : — : —	d.r : — : —	d : d : d
s ₁	d : — : d.d	d.d : — :	:	d : — : —	d : d : t.
Ha	e Nyine	u a tro i	e	Hae	hi a hi
s ₁	d : — : m.r	de.d : de :	:	de : — : —	r : de : r
s ₁	d : — : d.d	d.d : d : r.t.	r.t. : r : —	d : — : —	d : d : t.

WASUMATALI.

NYIMA NE MEKOL E JID (*Song of sleep at night*).

KEY D OR E.

.l.	d.r : re. m | r.de :	r : m | r.de	d : m | r : d
Sa	i wa su ma ta li Fe.n	ne penge na lo pengo gojen Ejengen	
	:	: r.m f.s : f.r | d : t. t.	r.m : r | d : d
	— : l.r |	m | r., d : d | — : —	
	Hae	ko lo la e	
	— : — |	: r d : d | — : —	

WEIAE.

NYIMA NE UFI HOTRO (*Song of the fife*).KEY G.

— : Fu fu	: fu fu fu fu	[·] r : fe	r.r : r.r fu fu fu fu	<i>r : r.r</i> fe fufu	<i>r : r.r</i> fe fufu
d:d	d.d : d.d	: d fe	<i>d.t₁ : r.d</i> Wei ae	d : d.r fu Oe	d : d.r O e fu
r.r : r fufu fe	r : fu	r : fe	: <i>d.r</i> fu fu	<i>t.d : r</i> fu fu fu	<i>d.r : r</i> fufu fu
<i>d.r : d</i> e fu	<i>d : d</i> fe	:	: d.d	d.d : d.r fu	d.d :
<i>d.r : d.r</i> fu fu	r : fu	r.r : r.r fufu fufu	: r.r fufu	r.r : r.r fufu fufu	r : fa
d.d : d.d	: d fue	<i>d.t₁ : r.d</i> ke sitmeu	d : fue	d : d fu e	: d fu
	: — fa	: r fu	: r fe		
	:	d : fu	d : fu		

The notes in Roman type are played on the flute. The italics are vocal.

The prevailing male voice was bass, and the female voice alto ; neither was very flexible, nor was the compass large in comparison with that of Europeans. But the majority have very sweet and musical voices. There were a few bards on Lifu who composed and taught the songs which the people sang to the accompaniment of dancing.

They usually began their dancing and singing slowly, and accelerated the speed as the excitement increased, their steps keeping pace with the music, until, becoming quite exhausted, they threw up their arms, gave a loud yell, and collapsed.

There were songs for men, and songs for women ; action songs ; duets and solos ; there were fighting songs, love songs, and songs to soothe to sleep, but no comic songs that I ever heard of.

The “Fehoa”—the real war song—encouraged the men to fight, stirring their blood by suggesting the valiant deeds they would accomplish; and reminding them how they would drink the blood of their enemy, the opposing chief, and enjoy eating his liver.

The *Nyine eu a tro?*—“Why should you go?”—was a song of persuasion, intended to calm the warriors and, if possible, persuade them to abandon the idea of war.

Another song of peace was *Nuebutelo*—“Don’t mind about fighting”—a song rarely accompanied by dancing.

The women sang songs of welcome, expressive of pride and joy at the return of the warriors safe and well.

There were duets for dancers, accompanied by suitable actions. The singers would beat time upon a gourd, the top of which had been taken off; or on the ground with a pad of leaves; or, again, by simply clapping the hands together.

At certain times a couple of young men were commanded to sing to a house full of people, and not to stop until everyone was lulled to sleep.

There were but few musical instruments, and they were very poor. One was a long piece of curved bamboo, made up at both ends, with two small holes burnt into it, about a foot from each end. This (thij) was blown as a flute, and produced rather an agreeable monotone. Smaller pieces of cane, made up at one end, and filled, or partly filled, with water, according to the pitch of the tone desired, were blown; these (hoho) produced a sound somewhat resembling that of Pan’s pipes.

There was also the "conch shell"—usually the Triton or Stramonita—which, as a musical instrument, needed much practice and considerable skill. This shell was also used to call the men to their council meetings, or to prepare for war.

Watching some native children at drill some time ago, I noticed their young officer sounded a capital "reveille" through a trumpet made from the hollow stem of a papaw apple leaf, with a small trumpet formation at the end, made out of the green leaf of a coconut palm.

Many of the light occupations of the natives might be regarded by us as amusements, but not so by a Loyalty Islander.

The men sat together chatting and talking under the shady trees, or by their firesides, making clubs, axe-handles, and rude archimedean drills, the "bit" of which was an uncut fragment of rough, hard stone. These drills were for piercing holes in jade stone, brought from New Caledonia. The green stone was made into beads, by rolling fragments of it between two stones and afterwards piercing them with the drill. These bead necklaces were worn and greatly prized by the women. They certainly represented a great deal of patience and labour, and are no longer made, consequently they are becoming very rare.

The men also made spears for fighting and for fishing, also nets, manufacturing, as I have said, their own twine from the bark of trees and the husks of coconuts.

The fancy work of the women was the making of beautiful fine mats and bags from the leaves of the screw pine. But this industry, like netting and twine-

making, was fast dying out, until we revived it by making it one of the subjects for the girls at the yearly examination, just as we have revived netting and twine-making for the boys.

The men and boys spent a good deal of their time in tattooing (thitha) and polishing their brown skins, also in dyeing and dressing their long, wavy hair.



They wore long strings of jade beads, each pierced separately by a home-made archimedean drill, the bit of which was an uncut fragment of hard stone.

There were no professionals in these arts, but as some men were more skilful than others, their services were in great demand.

Dyes for tattooing were obtained from burnt bananas, burnt coconuts, and the sap of certain trees ; but nothing could excel ordinary soot, from burnt wood, for durability and blackness.

The dye was pricked into the flesh with a fresh, sharp thorn. I am told that on *very* rare occasions the complete form of a man was attempted, but as a rule the designs were very simple and crude.

Many weeks before a festival was to be held, numbers of young men might be found in cool, shady spots dressing their hair and anointing their bodies.

To make their locks still blacker than their original colour, the men smeared them over with a paste made from burnt coconut.

Golden locks, however, were by far the most popular, and certainly they produced a more striking effect. To obtain these the hair was plastered over with fresh lime—which was easily obtained by burning a little coral—and this was allowed to remain on for three or four days; after which the head was well washed in the sea. It was then rubbed briskly with burnt coconut, and washed again, when the hair was found to be of a pale straw or primrose colour, which colour it retained for many months; indeed I think this dyed hair never reverted to its original colour, but the new hair gradually darkened the head.

After the dyeing came the dressing. The hair, which was naturally very coarse and curly, was allowed to grow long, and was worn in different styles. The favourite method of dressing the hair was to twist it into gimlet-like curls, tying each curl firmly at the end. These curls were bound round the head, and kept in place by a piece of native cloth (*wathë*), or *tapa*, made from well-beaten bark.

In about two months' time a day was appointed for the all-important work of letting loose these long,

thin locks of hair, which usually reached down to the shoulders and over the face.

Corkscrew and gimlet ringlets have now gone out of fashion in this group. Perhaps the last specimen of this male coiffure was one my husband noticed in a remote village to which he had gone to conduct a religious service. When he rose to commence the service, he observed a tall, muscular native—who sat quite close to the door, as though he were acting as doorkeeper—whose face was completely hidden by a long fringe of these gimlet-shaped ringlets, his head having the same appearance before and behind. He wore no clothing except the regular loin-cloth, and yet he must have had a receptacle of some kind, for on the missionary announcing the first hymn, the man deliberately divided his front ringlets into two parts, neatly tucking them away behind his two ears; then he produced a pair of pince-nez, which he adjusted on his nose, and joined the congregation in singing the hymn.

All the hair dressing and dyeing was confined entirely to the men. They used coarse combs (*isej*) made from wood or bamboo, and they combed the hair *upwards* rather than downwards.

No thought was given to the women's hair—except as to the best method of keeping it short; and to this end it was burnt off as close as possible to the head with a piece of lighted wood.

A similar fire-stick was the sole shaving apparatus of the men; until in later years this was replaced by a piece of glass bottle.

Although the natives' bodies were naturally very oily, ointments were in great demand for beautifying purposes. These were mostly obtained from the



1

3

2

1, 2. FINGER TASSELS USED IN NATIVE DANCES. 3. THEY USED
COARSE COMBS MADE OF BAMBOO OR WOOD.

coconuts which were so plentiful on the island. To produce these oils, the nuts were scraped with a serrated shell and rubbed over the head and body—a larger quantity of oil was obtained if the nuts were partly burnt before being scraped; but the purest oil was made by chewing the nut and spitting it into a fibrous substance (Ipanu) which envelops the lower part of the coconut leaf. The oil was left to drain for a few days, after which it had to be used at once, otherwise it became rancid.

Another oil, and one which was a favourite unguent for their brown skins, was obtained from a pretty yellow fruit about the size of a peach. This fruit had a strong, sweet almond perfume, and the kernel was about two-thirds the size of the whole fruit. The oil was extracted from the kernel partly by the application of heat.

In addition to the manufacture of oil, the Lifuans possessed the secret of extracting perfume from the bark of a sweet-smelling tree called *Xutrepet*, and this they did without the aid of stills or any other elaborate chemical appliances. The secret is a secret no longer—it has been divulged to me, and I pass it on.

It is as follows: The men chewed some of the bark of the *Xutrepet* tree, together with some coconut; and when all was well masticated it was spat into the hands, and rubbed over their bodies; for some considerable time afterwards they dispensed sweet odours wherever they went. But all this again was for the men only; the women were altogether of a too inferior social standard to have oils or perfumes wasted on them.

They were not, however, quite without ornamenta-



JADE NECKLACES.

The women wore long strings of beautiful jade beads.

tions. They wore beautiful long strings of jade beads (of which I have already spoken), and these were often threaded on the wool (dela) made from the fur of the



They wore bracelets above the elbows which were made from large cone shells.

flying fox, which they value so much ; also they had bracelets (ija) made from large cone-shells, and these they wore, not on the wrists, but above the elbow.

CHAPTER IX

SUPERSTITION—CHARMS, OMENS, TOTEMS

THE mind of a Loyalty Islander was saturated with a firm belief in supernatural agencies. He believed that bad spirits were embodied in trees, shrubs, sticks, and stones, and that their power was under control of certain mortals who used charms or medicines as their mediums ; also that the spirits were ever on the alert to work evil on the sons of men.

If ever a native could obtain possession of one of these obsessed stones—however low in rank he might be—he at once became a man of position and importance. With this fetish in his hand, and under his control, he was able to keep his neighbours in a state of abject terror. The Lifuan name for these stones is *haze*, and the man who owns one is called “ tene haze,” or spirit owner.

The early missionaries took the name for God from this word, namely, “ Cahaze ” ; “ Ca ”—“ one,” “ haze ”—“ spirit ”—the one Spirit ; but this word is rarely used now, a more modern name for the Deity being “ Akotesie ” (which is the court language equivalent).

The supernatural powers of a “ tene haze ” were not confined to any locality. He was supposed to possess authority even over people dwelling on the

neighbouring islands. A case of this kind occurred not very long ago. One of our Lifuan young men returned from working in New Caledonia. He complained that whilst he had been away he had suffered very much from headaches. He was still no better after his return ; and one day, meeting an old man in the road, he said, “ I believe that *you* are the cause of my frequent headaches ; I warn you that you had better give up practising your witchcraft upon me.” The old man made no reply, but passed on ; the attacks of headache were as frequent and as severe as formerly.

Again the two men met, and again the younger one warned the old man, using terrible threats of vengeance in case his normal health was not restored. Never a word spake the supposed sorcerer, but passed on as before.

The youth looked after him for some time ; then, being filled with wrath, partly at the callousness of the old man, and partly owing to his own conviction that he was unable to cope with a “ tene haze,” he, without thinking of the consequences, hurried after his enemy, struck him on the head, and killed him. For this crime he is now serving a term of imprisonment in New Caledonia.

Superstition is said to die hard, and we find this to be the case here as elsewhere. The natives laugh with us at its absurdity, and evidently wish to disbelieve in these “ hazes ” ; but in their zeal to abolish the superstitious belief in them they often only prove the magnitude of their faith in them.

In travelling from village to village we sometimes become enamoured of a grand old tree—a landmark for generations. On our next journey, it may have disappeared ; and we learn that it has been burnt

down, because it has long harboured evil spirits, which the people are unwilling to tolerate any longer.

For the same reason, the fetishes are being sought out and burnt throughout the island, with such zeal as affords ample proof of the importance attached to them in the native mind.

As a rule, the imputation of the possession of a stone fetish is often regarded by the accused as a flattering compliment ; and when subsequently trouble arises it is often too late to escape by a denial of the charge.

About two years ago, several natives in a distant district were accused of possessing “ hazes,” also of causing sickness and death in the neighbourhood. The affair created a kind of panic throughout the island of Lifu.

One young man was brought up before the native tribunal and charged with being a “ tene haze.” He was requested either to give up his fetish, or show the place where it was hidden, after which he would be absolved from all punishment. For some time he stoutly denied having any such stone in his possession, or, indeed, any supernatural power whatever over the people.

The more earnestly he protested his innocence, however, the more excited became the people ; he could get no rest day or night, and ultimately became so harassed and terrified that he promised to show the people where the fetish was hidden.

He led them to the top of a very high and rugged ridge of rocks, and then, before any one quite realised what was happening, he sprang from the rocks, and put an end to the life that had become unbearable.

About the same time, two women, living at different villages in the same district, were also accused of

witchcraft. Both declared they were innocent and that they had nothing whatever to do with fetishes. But the people had reasons for thinking otherwise ; and as there were no stocks or pillories on the island, the women were suspended by their limbs from the branches of large trees. Occasionally they were taken down and questioned, but neither of them would admit that she was guilty.

One of the two, who was suspended by her hands or wrists from an acacia tree, was deserted by her custodians for so long a time that on their return they found she was dead.

The other might have shared a similar fate but for the interference of a man of high rank from another village. He, having heard of the death of the former supposed witch, and learning that another was being tortured, hastened to the spot and insisted on her release.

A few weeks afterwards this woman showed me her hands and wrists, which were maimed for life ; and as she assured me that she was perfectly innocent of all witchcraft or uncharitable feelings, I felt more convinced than ever that the people had been guilty of a cruel and barbarous act.

Afterwards I heard the other side of the story. The people unanimously asserted that this woman had of late frequently given bananas and other food to the children of the village, after eating which many of them had been seriously ill, and others had died ; moreover, the woman had boasted that she was the cause of these deaths.

Now the most precious thing in the world to a Lifuan, in these days, is his child. Judge then of the anger and grief of the stricken parents when they heard

that this woman was glorying in her evil deeds. The majority of her neighbours were fully convinced of her guilt, and that by the exercise of her witchcraft she had caused the death of the children.

They knew nothing of ducking-stools for witches, and so they punished her in the most practical way they could think of. They tied her to a tree in the hope that ultimately she would reveal to them the secret hiding-place of her fetish, that they might destroy it.

I have never been able to find out on what grounds certain persons were accused of possessing these fetishes.

A few years ago, one of the deacons of the church was found to be suffering from a polypus in his nose. With what appeared to be a spontaneous consensus of opinion, a very quiet, inoffensive, elderly man was charged with having caused the disease by the help of a "haze." He strenuously denied the charge, but when his house was searched a "haze" was found hidden away in one of his boxes, where it had probably lain for years. After the fetish had been discovered, the man, being greatly distressed in his mind, offered it to his brother, who, however, refused it. For days the man went about distracted—why, I fail to understand; hardly because of fear of punishment, seeing that if he gave up the "haze" no punishment would be inflicted on him; and surely he must have known all the time that the "haze" was in his possession, when it really ought to have been destroyed. However, he was unable to sleep, refused all food, and finally he committed suicide by hanging himself from a branch of a high tree.

I have the fetish now. It is a cone-shaped piece

of ironstone, about one and a half inches in length. It lies in a bed of dried leaves and grasses, which are no doubt the mediums by which it worked. There



1. STONE "HAZE" OR FETISH SCRAPPED AND EATEN TO GIVE STRENGTH OF BODY AND FORTITUDE OF MIND.
2. FETISH IN BED OF MEDICINE LEAVES. IT HAS THE REPUTATION OF HAVING KILLED ONE OF THE WRITER'S FRIENDS.

was formerly also a part of a big toe-nail, probably belonging to a former "tene haze."

To propitiate these "tene hazes," men gave them large presents of the best kinds of food, and everyone was lavish in bestowing upon them gifts, or in complying with their smallest wishes : otherwise he might be

killed in war, or have his house mysteriously burnt down.

The influence of these sorcerers was great in life, and even after death they retained much of their former greatness, for other would-be sorcerers contended for the possession of their eyes, their fingers, their toe-nails, or their bones ; they also begged that the body might be buried in their own private grounds, so that they might become endowed with some of the mystic powers of the dead man in addition to those they already supposed themselves to be possessed of.

The natives were also in the habit of carrying about mascots in the form of a dead father's toe-nail or finger-nail or lock of hair to secure success in fighting, fishing, and working.

A "haze" was considered generally to be a harmless thing intrinsically, with no power to effect mischief apart from the will of its owner ; in spite of this fact, however, a native rarely looked upon one without showing an unmistakable sign of fear ; but it was a "tene haze" only who knew how to operate it by certain gifts, accompanied by the use of medicines, works, and signs.

A sorcerer used his fetish in various ways for the destruction of his enemy.

One method adopted by him was as follows. He provided himself with a stout stick and some native medicine, and with these and his "haze" he climbed to the top of the highest tree he could find, as close as possible to the house of his enemy. Here he sat chewing his medicine and watching patiently until he saw the spirit of his adversary gradually rising through the roof of his hut. Quickly he rubbed the medicine over his stick, and whispering the name of the man

who lived in the hut to his "haze," he struck several vigorous blows at the spirit as it rose higher and higher, until it appeared to lose strength and sank exhausted on the ground. The sorcerer then felt assured that he would have no further trouble with the body whose spirit he had just destroyed.

The spirit of a man was sometimes spoken of as his shadow (*ahnuen*) ; and it was supposed to retain the same qualities which characterised him in the bodily state. This does not speak very highly in favour of the finer qualities of the people, seeing that it is an article of their belief that nearly *all* spirits are bad.

I had been living on the island some years before I discovered that stones were not the only objects used by the sorcerers in the practice of their art. I have now in my possession a fetish composed of tiny shell-like discs or wampums, called by the natives "pao"—"valuable." I am informed that the possessors of this particular fetish—the "pao"—in former times derived very substantial benefits by the exercise of their occult powers.

Whenever a man wished to remove his enemy by death, he would seek the aid of a man who possessed a "pao," taking with him a valuable present—a huge double canoe not being considered at all too much. (I did not give such a valuable present for the "pao" in my possession. It was sold to me because, said the natives, since the advent of Christianity its power has been lost.) If the sorcerer agreed to his client's terms, he took two or three of these small discs, wrapped them in certain medicines, and buried them secretly ; after which he confidently waited to hear of the death of his victim.

A very intelligent old man of this village, a descen-



FORMERLY SAVAGES AND CANNIBALS, NOW GOOD CHRISTIANS.

The man in the front row on the right is a descendant of the rain-makers.

dant of a rain-maker, insisted that these small discs were not from shells at all, but from leaves of certain trees which grow on New Caledonia. He then told us how they were produced, thus : A number of leaves were collected and placed in a heap on the sandy beach. These were burnt, and when the ashes were blown away by the wind, a quantity of these discs were found lying on the spot. Even so, they may be bits of coral mixed amongst the sand ; for I have seen similar discs, but larger, on the sandy beach at Uvea ; I have also ear-rings and necklaces from New Guinea made from similar fragments of shell or coral.

There were some stones of the stalactite order which were greatly prized because they were supposed to have the power of infusing new strength and life into the bodies of their votaries, who would scrape and eat a little of the stone before undertaking any great enterprise.

I am told that a sorcerer had no power over the life of a youngest son, even if the latter had had the audacity to steal from one of his class. Why he should be thus exempt no one seemed to understand.

Some years ago I had a number of stone fetishes sent to me from New Caledonia. A part of them was packed in a case, whilst others were tied up in a small sack. The crew of the vessel which brought them were all Lifuans. They knew the contents of the bag, but not of the case. On their arrival at Lifu they brought the case to me, and with genuine sorrow, and some shame, they said it was impossible to bring me the sack of stone " hazes " ; explaining the reason by saying that the first night they got out to sea, and when most of the crew were asleep below, the " hazes "

began to cry ; they made so much noise that no one was able to sleep. This went on for some time until the stones, seeing that no notice was taken of them, became exceedingly angry. They came out of the bag and began to bang themselves about the deck, dancing, yelling, and shouting, until the men, fearing for their own lives, as well as for the safety of the vessel, were reluctantly obliged to throw the bag and its contents overboard. Had they known the contents of the case, that would doubtless have shared a similar fate, and I did not think it advisable to inform them, lest future calamities should be attributed to me.

One of our pastors once brought to me an orange cowry, *Cypræa aurora*—a shell which is very rare in this group, and told me the following story :—

A Lifuan woman was out on the reef at low tide looking for shell-fish, or other dainties for the evening meal. Seeing this particular shell, and thinking it was something new and pretty, she put it into her bag. Directly she reached dry land, she was met by a demon, who struck her on the head, angrily demanding how she dared touch his shell. The poor woman was terrified, and as she wended her way home her heart was full of evil forebodings. As soon as she reached her own place she related her sad story, and a few hours afterwards she died. One might suggest sunstroke, only that would prove one's utter ignorance of the powers and ways of evil spirits.

There was one class of natives (atesi) that we can scarcely rank as sorcerers, and yet who were supposed to be endowed with special powers. One of these functionaries was attached to each chief. It was his special prerogative to say whatever he pleased—however insulting—to the chief with perfect impunity.

The special duty allotted to him was to visit other tribes and communities with a view to the promotion of peace and harmony.

On one occasion I was talking to a commoner—a very intelligent man—about some unjust conduct on the part of one of the big chiefs of the island. After quietly thinking over what I had said, and knowing already a good deal about the affair, he gravely remarked: “I think that ‘So-and-so’ and I must go and talk to the big chief.” I was quietly amused, until later I learnt that this man and his friend were members of the class above mentioned.

On the island of Uvea these men were called “Hobat Kong,” or one who smooths away difficulties. The name may possibly have been derived from the name of a stone used in deep sea-fishing. This stone, which was usually annular in shape and about six or eight inches in diameter, had a long line attached to it, and was employed in freeing any fish-hooks which might have been caught in the branches of the coral rocks which formed part of the bed of the lagoon.

The stone was threaded, like a gigantic bead, on the fish-line of the imprisoned hook; and it was lowered by its cord until it reached the neighbourhood of the hook, when a few skilful blows and jerks from the “hobat kong” would break up the brittle coral and release the precious hook. Probably the name “hobat kong” was applied to the class of natives mentioned above because they too were supposed to be chiefly engaged in the removal of obstacles or tribal disputes.

There seems to have been no religious belief in a Supreme Being among the Lifuans, but a sort of ancestor worship was evidently practised by them.

They tell of four powerful beings (Welewen, Wenegei, Zangiza, and Hwë) representing the three districts of the island; but the natives generally seem to give the palm to the one called "Walewen." To him was imputed the power of turning sticks and vines into snakes, and to a Lifuan there were few things more horrible or uncanny than a snake.

At the command of Walewen mere infants climbed trees and supplied him with coconuts. None need trouble about carrying Walewen's yams; they picked themselves up and followed him. Even the rocks were his slaves, and whenever he returned from fishing, and wished to hide his spoil, they opened at his command and received his fish until he had further need of it. The people still talk of this wonderful man, who lived at the village of Ejengen. The Protestants endow him with the gift of prophecy, and attribute their success to his sage advice. He once told the natives in his district that at some future day two strangers would arrive—one from the east and the other from the west—and these men would present to them two different religious doctrines. He said, "Accept the message from the east and great blessings will descend upon you and your children; have nothing whatever to do with the man from the west."

Subsequently a native of Samoa, named "Fao," came and introduced the Protestant religion, and the people, remembering the words of Walewen, received him gladly and accepted his teachings. The Roman Catholic religion was introduced from the west, and for that reason was rejected by the majority of the people.

These four powerful men were also appealed to in

times of great fear and anxiety, in the belief that it was in their power to avert disaster.

Each tribe had its own particular totem. In one tribe it took the form of a lizard ; in another that of a rat ; whilst everyone agreed that the kingfisher—" Ciciëte "—was a bird of ill omen and the incarnation of wickedness. To the present day he is regarded with ill-favour, and indeed his boldness and wicked knowing looks suggest all kinds of devilry. However hungry a Lifuan may be, he can never persuade himself to eat either a kingfisher (*ciciëti*), a white owl (*men*), or a lizard (*thu*).

Some time ago one of our cats caught a kingfisher but refused to eat it. I pointed out the fact to a native who was about the house ; but he showed not the least surprise, his remark being equivalent to saying, " Do you suppose your cat, or any other well regulated cat, would dare to devour a ' ciciëte ' ? "

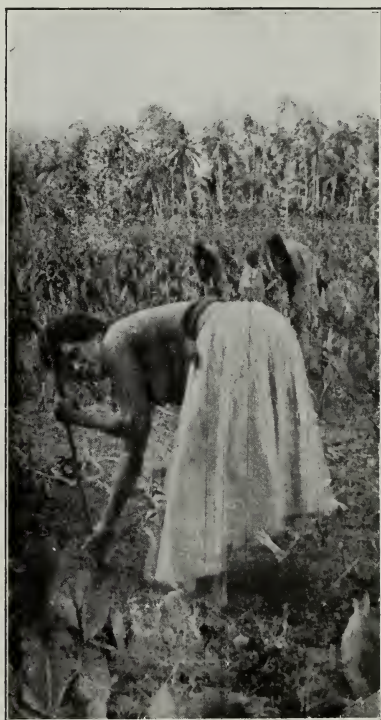
Supposing the totem of a particular sorcerer to be an owl, the sorcerer was supposed to know and quickly recognise the individual member of the species which acted as his special medium ; but as other members had not the same power of discernment, all the individuals of the three species enjoyed a happy immunity from wilful slaughter ; for everyone feared to destroy any of these birds or animals lest it should prove to be the incarnation of some powerful spirit. They believed too that the death of one of these mediums also meant the death of the sorcerer who controlled the spirit embodied in it.

The appearance of a kingfisher did not always augur the same event. To a man, of whose tribe he was the totem, his appearance was a certain premonition of death ; whilst to a woman belonging to another tribe,

and with a different totem, he brought good news ; for his peculiar whining note told her that there was some fish at her home needing her attention ; and so thoroughly did she believe this that she at once left her plantation and hurried home to prepare the fish for the evening meal.

A dead lizard lying in the road indicated to men of certain tribes that they would do well to return at once to their homes, because some member of their family was about to pass away. The people also believed that the death of their relation would be sudden or lingering according to the manner in which the lizard had died ; another tribe had exactly the same ideas about a rat.

One of our old chiefs told me that when his father lay dying, almost his last words were that his spirit would be transmigrated into the body of a dark bird about the size of a pigeon, called "halo." He solemnly warned his son to tell his people that whenever they were going out to war and



UVEAN WOMEN WORKING IN TARO PLANTATION.

The piece of wood is worked to and fro and round and round.

met a "halo" they must at once abandon their enterprise and return to their homes, otherwise terrible disaster would overtake them.

Running rats and flying birds, going before certain men, warned them that their enemies were lying in ambush, and that they would be wise to proceed no farther.

The white owl was an object of superstitious dread, but his evil influence might be frustrated if only someone got in front of him dancing and singing

"Ha meni föe i ёo Hnakunyё,"

the meaning of which is "Oh white owl you will have your sister for your wife." This performance, and the grave insult suggested by the words of the song, were too much for the owl's endurance—he immediately fell to the ground and expired.

If ever a man's house was burnt down he generally expected further disaster, and the people assure me it generally followed in the death of one of his children.

Children were taught to pretend to cry whenever they saw a dove's nest, for in so doing they would avert some calamity which might otherwise overtake one of their parents. This has probably some connection with the old legend of the dove as related on page 251.

Near the village of Jokin there is a large hole in the rocks, which was formerly the home of two evil spirits.* Whenever the people had occasion to visit this cave, they invariably went in pairs, or in even numbers; because odd numbers so greatly irritated the spirits that they took their revenge by causing the death of one of the party within a very short time.

* The name of the male spirit was Wasepёnemё; that of his wife was Wanamadahni.

Not very far from my home at Lifu there was a stone, about two feet in diameter, which was covered with hard knobs and small holes as though riddled with shot. Anyone wishing to cause his enemy to suffer from a crop of boils had merely to put a small stick into one of these holes, then run several times round the stone, repeating the name of the person he wished to injure.

The people of the village of Hmelek tell about a large banyan tree that formerly stood in the middle of their village. This tree was supposed to be the abode of evil spirits ; and the men and boys of the village regarded it with so much animosity that they frequently pelted it with stones, and chopped it with their small axes.

The tree, being otherwise unable to protect itself from these insults and impertinences, removed itself bodily to the next village, about seven miles away. There it stands at the present day, showing its contempt for the people of Hmelek by turning all its branches away from their village and pointing them in an opposite direction.

The natives used the term “haze” to denote the fetish itself, as well as the demon or spirit which it represented.

The great majority of “hazes” were bad—as bad as they could possibly be—and they all possessed a malicious desire to injure mankind ; they were credited with destroying the souls of men and so causing their death.

The spirits of the departed, however, were not supposed to exhibit any malicious propensities towards mortals. They hovered about their own friends and the former abode of their human bodies ;

but they were not greatly feared. Nevertheless, I noticed that the friends of the departed, in these days, were always careful to avoid graveyards after dark, to carry torches at night, and to make various sounds when sitting alone in their houses after dark. The old women, when alone, sometimes scattered ashes about the door and sides of the house, all of which mild expedients were calculated to keep these gentler spirits at a respectful distance. "Because," said my informant, "it is rather uncanny to feel the spirit of a friend *too* near you, or walking shoulder to shoulder with you on a pitch dark night."

Whenever a man was greatly startled, he imagined his spirit had left him, and he at once called out, "Where are you? Have you gone north, south, east, or west? Come back, come back"; and sometimes a friend would say to another, "Don't be troubled that my spirit has gone north, south, east, or west; I myself am still here."

A humming sound in the ears denoted to a Lifuan that his spirit was meeting with another spirit.

Whenever a man fainted, or became unconscious, it was because his spirit had left him; and so, for the time, he was "dead"; but his friends immediately came to the rescue. They rushed here and there to find the owner of the land on which the sick man lay, and when they found him they implored him to use his influence to call back the departed spirit. If he consented, he at once started off into the thick bush, angrily haranguing the spirits in the surrounding trees, stones, and bushes. He demanded of them by what right they had entered *his* territory and carried off the spirit of his friend. Then, in a humbler,

gentler tone, he implored them to return it as soon as possible. If the spirits acquiesced, the man recovered ; if not—well then his spirit had departed in the usual way, because his time had come.

Whenever the ends of the fingers of the right hand or the sole of the right foot itched, it was an indication that someone was speaking well of you ; but the left foot, or hand, indicated just the opposite. Sometimes ill-natured gossips stopped their backbiting, because they were afraid lest the hand or the foot of the libelled person should begin to itch and so betray them.

Many spirits of both sexes, when they left the human body, took up their abode on a small island, or reef, between Lifu and Uvea called by the Uveans “*Bomene Kap*,” or Holy Island. This island was generally under water at high tide. It was supposed to be thickly populated by these spirits of the departed. The natives alleged, in proof of the truth of this supposition, that whenever a *bad* man went fishing in the neighbourhood, he invariably either pulled up a woman’s grass skirt, or the leaves that had been used in making the national pudding—the *itra* ; whilst when a good man went fishing he pulled up nothing but fish.

I am told that these spirits often visited Lifu, and were visible to persons of all ranks, but no one had ever been able to come into close contact with them, because they were always enveloped in a soft, cloudy mist. The Lifuans firmly believe that animals are highly endowed with second sight, much more so indeed than human beings ; and this, they say, is why a dog, at the present day, rushes out of the house at night and barks at no one ; also why a horse some-

times refuses to move until its rider dismounts and leads him past the object of his terror.

Spirits often made their presence known by making peculiar noises. At the village of Kejanya, away from all the houses and near to the sea, there formerly lived two spirits, named Elehmedë and his wife Wana-madahni, whose chief amusement seems to have been to ridicule any person who was deformed or peculiar-looking. Even animals were not exempt from their scathing remarks. Their words were distinctly heard, and their laugh was like the loud laughing of men.

Food was formerly placed near the dead for the use of the spirit; also at the door of the hut where a sorcerer dwelt. This food was never eaten by the sorcerer himself, neither was it given to any of his friends who lived close at hand; but it was reserved for those friends who lived at a distance.

Many of the superstitious beliefs of the natives do not appear so absurd to people living on the spot as their simple recital would make them appear to outsiders; indeed, they often gain support and confirmation by local circumstances and colouring difficult to describe. For example, a man living on our premises at Uvea had a family of six daughters who all died of consumption in about three years; their deaths generally taking place about May or June during our stay there.

The day after the last child was buried the father said to us, "Last year when my two daughters died two small birds came into my house and remained there all night in spite of the fire and the smoke. They perched on my shoulder and allowed me to place my hands on them, they sat on my rough bed and

were quite tame. In the morning I took one of them in my hands and went outside the hut, thinking it would fly away, but instead of that it flew back into the house ; I tried the other bird, but with the same result. Later I tried again, this time going farther from the house, when both birds flew quite away. And now that my last little one is dead another of these birds has come to stay with us. Whenever strangers enter the house, it flies up to one of the high beams ; but when we are alone, the bird is quite tame with me." In answer to our question as to the whereabouts of the bird at that moment, he said it was still in his house, and asked if we would like to see it. We went with him to his hut and saw a bird, somewhat in appearance like an English yellowhammer, and called by the natives " Pachem," perched on one of the black beams of his house. These birds are called by the white people " Silver eyes," because of the white rims round their eyes, and they are among the shyest of native birds. The native who told us about the birds said, " I do not like to handle them roughly or force them to go away." Indeed, no ! for had he not a feeling that, in some way or other, they were the embodiments of the spirits of his beloved ones, come to comfort him in his great sorrow.

Even beachcombers, after a long residence among the natives, become almost as superstitious as the natives themselves. Here are a few cases of sorcery that have come to my knowledge of late years.

A famous sorcerer of Lifu was sent to Noumea, New Caledonia, by the French Resident, on account of the disturbances and excitement he created by his wonderful occult powers, and because of his per-

sistent practice of witchcraft. Whilst there, he was visited by an Uvean, a perfect stranger, who begged of him to explain why so many of his children died. Now the wizard had never been near this man's place, and yet he said, "Don't you live at Weneke?" The Uvean said that was the name of his place. "Does So-and-so live on one side of you, and is the neighbour on the other side a tall man, and much lighter complexioned than any of the other people about?" This was so. "Then," said the wizard, "*that* is the man who is causing the death of your children. When you return home, that man will be the first to greet you, and to offer you his hand."

The Uvean shortly afterwards returned to his home, and almost before the vessel had dropped anchor, a number of men scrambled on board, the tall fair man amongst them, who greeted the traveller with outstretched hand. Strangely enough, it was quite exceptional for this man, who was the Roman Catholic catechist, to visit foreign vessels.

This same sorcerer was once on board a steamer, as passenger, where there were many foreigners as crew. One of the native passengers missed some money from his box, and, suspecting one of the crew, solicited the aid of the wizard in detecting the culprit. The "wise man" looked coolly around on the group of natives standing near, and then said with great scorn, "None of these foreigners has taken your money; the thief is one of your own countrymen." Then, pointing to an Uvean, he said, "*That* is the man, he has taken so many dollars and francs." The thief afterwards acknowledged his guilt to a white trader, as well as his belief in the power of the wizard, somewhat as follows: "No gammon, that

fellow he got too much devil ; he savē too much ; he savē true all a dollar me bin a take.”

On one of the islets called Mututapu which form the beautiful lagoon of Uvea there stands a large stone which is said to be unlike any other stone which has ever been seen in these islands, and which is supposed to come from New Caledonia. The story goes that a certain old woman placed it there, and she commanded that whoever visited the island was on no account to carry anything away. Now whoever has dared to disobey the mandate of this old dame has died, so that now her law is strictly observed. A short time ago it was reported that a quantity of phosphate was to be had on this island, which was greatly coveted by a French trader. He knew it was useless to ask the people to get it for him—all were afraid. He had, however, at the time, a man working for him who was noted for his self-will and pride. I knew him well—he was once one of our “boys,” and at the time I am telling about he was a strong, healthy, well-built man of about twenty-eight years of age. Now this man, in his great pride and conceit, offered to go alone, which he did, and brought back a quantity of phosphate. A day or two afterwards, having a little headache, he asked his mother—a great friend of mine—to prepare him some native medicines. In the meantime he went out in a boat with one of his friends ; as they were returning he said, “A great fear has taken possession of me ; I feel as though I were about to be brought before a tribunal.” Reaching home, he drank the medicine his mother had prepared, and remained very quiet for a time. Being questioned, he assured his friends there was very little wrong with him ; the day following he was still

quiet, but again affirmed he was not ill, but as his friends looked at him they noticed that one side of his face and body was changing colour and becoming a dark purple ; and they, fearing they knew not what, began to cry. He put out his hand to reassure them, saying, “ Don’t cry, if I were ill I would tell you so ; give me a cigarette.” He spoke a little while with his wife, then, without the least pain, or apparent loss of power in any of his limbs, he suddenly passed away.

A similar story was told to me by a white woman who lived many years in Queensland, and knew some South Sea Island “ boys.” One day a man named Tom Tanna—a native of Tanna—asked her to take charge of a small bag for him. She threw the bag into one of her boxes, and forgot all about it. Months afterwards she was hurriedly searching for something in this box, and tossed out the whole contents. A little girl, standing near, noticed the little bag, and asked permission to open it. It was tied up with a piece of red cord, to which was attached a small green stone. Inside the bag were three small stones, one of which resembled a man’s eye, the second a man’s foot, and the third a man’s hand. After examining them all she replaced them in the bag, tied it up, and threw it again into her box.

Now at this time the woman had a brood of fifteen young ducks which she kept well guarded from rats, snakes, etc., in a well-constructed poultry cage. She went to feed them as usual the morning after she had turned out her box, and found every duck dead, each one having a round hole in its head through which its brains had evidently been extracted. Seeing a native that she knew passing by, she called to him to come

and see what had happened. He also was a Tanna man, and directly he saw the ducks he said, "What have you in your possession that belongs to my island?" For the moment the woman had forgotten the little bag, and answered that she had nothing. The Tanna man, however, insisted that she *must* have something, and then she remembered the little bag and told him about it. "Has anyone seen the contents?" Yes, she and the little girl. The native looked grave for some time and then said, "You have escaped very well indeed to lose your ducks only. The contents of that bag are tabooed to strangers, and anyone looking at them is liable to lose, by death, a member of his family. Give the bag back to its owner as soon as possible." The woman wrote to Tom Tanna, who immediately started on a journey of about 300 miles to receive his treasure from her own hands.

One can understand cases like these making lasting impressions on the simple islanders.

Superstition is dying out, but its death is difficult and slow; and often when we have thought it had entirely gone, at least in its more preposterous phases, it has given a few convulsive gasps, proving to us that it still has a strong hold over the minds of most of our poor deluded islanders.

CHAPTER X

CANNIBALISM AND WAR

LOYALTY ISLANDERS declare that although they were cannibals in the olden days, they had not always been cannibals. The Lifuans assert that they were driven into it by extreme hunger and famine. The Uveans say that they learnt it from the natives of New Caledonia.

When a man possessed twenty or thirty wives he naturally found himself at the head of a large family ; so that whenever the great longing for animal food—expressed in the words “ pi one ”—took possession of him, he did not scruple to sacrifice one of his own children, over whom he exercised absolute right of life and death. Naturally, however, he preferred a child from his neighbour's stock, and this led to many serious quarrels.

A man was also at liberty to take the life of one of his wives without interference from the general public ; but often he had to reckon with the wife's brothers, who invariably took up her cause, and rarely let it drop until they had meted out to the husband the same treatment he had inflicted on their sister.

Bodies were cooked whole ; they were wrapped up in banana or coconut leaves, and cooked on hot stones, in exactly the same way as an itra. No

importance or value was attached to the bones of a commoner ; but the bones of a sorcerer were supposed to retain occult powers, and were therefore preserved.

Warlike hostilities were never undertaken without the due observance of certain unwritten laws. No matter how grave or serious the quarrel may have been between two chiefs or two districts, the etiquette of war was strictly observed, and several days' notice was given before fighting actually began.

Arrangements were made between the chiefs by two or three special men, generally brothers, called " macas " or " messengers." These persons were regarded for the time as sacred and holy ; they were on no account to be injured, or hindered in the fulfilment of their duty to either party.

After the allotted days had expired, if no peaceable settlements had been made, each party started out fully armed, and fell upon the first man they met who belonged to the opposite side.

Women and children were never allowed to take part in any fighting, neither were they molested by either party. It was their custom, however, to send forth their men to the fight with rousing war songs still ringing in their ears—the song " Fehoa " being the favourite, because it extolled their great bravery and strength, and told with what pride and joy the men would return bringing with them the bodies of their enemies.

The warriors got terribly excited, and gave vent to their feelings by wild, hideous gestures, yells, and shoutings. It is said, however, that " their bark was louder than their bite." No order or discipline was observed, but each man was allowed to follow his own inclinations. The men renowned for their great

strength and courage wore tuft (hazemën) of sea birds' feathers in their hair to distinguish them and to inspire the weaker ones; but whenever these men felt they were losing ground, they passed these emblems to a stronger or braver comrade.

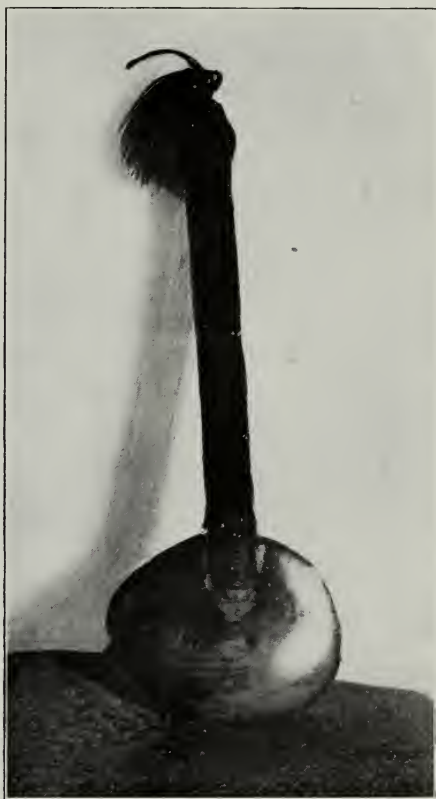
Battles rarely lasted more than a day, and were never carried on through the night. As soon as one side had lost four or five men and the other side about ten or twelve, the command to "cease fighting" came from the chief of the losing side. He then withdrew with his men, amid the jeers and laughter of the enemy, who also returned to their homes, taking their dead adversaries as spoil.

In the camp of the victors a cannibal feast was held, followed by dancing and singing, which was kept going until the day dawned; then, weary with the exertions of the day and the revelry of the night, they were fain to retire to their little huts for sleep and rest.

A few days after the declaration of peace, the vanquished chief received a present from his adversary—partly to comfort him in his sorrow, and partly to show that all animosity was at an end. The present was graciously accepted, but the friendliness was only external; beneath it all was an undercurrent of wrath, which was only restrained by the influence of the sorcerers. When, however, the psychological moment next arrived, the vanquished chief would give the signal, when everyone would immediately set about making preparations for another battle, in which they hoped to capture as many of the enemy as the number of men they had lost.

In addition to taking the spoil of dead bodies, the conquering chief seized the standard of the enemy.

This was called a "sio." It was a splendid disc of jade stone mounted on a long wooden handle, and ornamented with native valuables such as cloth(wathë)



"SIO," NATIVE STANDARD.

Disk of jade stone ornamented with native cloth and flying fox wool.

and wool from the flying fox (dela). This stone was rare and was accounted one of their most treasured possessions. It was never found in the Loyalty Group, but was imported from New Caledonia.

In times of peace these royal standards or maces—

each of which had its own name—were passed about as a complimentary mark of honour among friendly chiefs.

The weapons used for fighting were clubs, spears, sling stones, and bows and arrows.



LIFUAN AND UVEAN CLUBS.

The one in the centre is both Uvean and New Caledonian. The other two are Lifuan; that with the notched edge has done much execution. The number of notches shows the number of deaths it has caused.

The clubs (jia) were made from hard wood scraped and polished to a perfection of smoothness, by means of a stone and much friction. They were of various shapes, but as a rule conformed to a certain pattern, some being in the form of a bird's head and beak—this design originally came from New Caledonia—the others having a round head which was encircled by a sharp edge. These edges were some-

times indented with notches, each notch signifying the death of an enemy. The clubs were often ornamented on the handles with wool made from the fur of the flying fox; and although they were very heavy, and appeared somewhat unwieldy, they were handled

with great skill and force. The father of one of our old schoolboys was struck in the back with a club of the bird's beak shape ; the weapon completely penetrated his body from back to front. (There was no disgrace whatever attached to a wound in the back.)

Sling stones, which were some two inches in length, were brought from New Caledonia. They were chiselled out of a particularly hard stone, resembling granite, and cut into oblong shapes pointed at both ends.

Most native warriors were adepts in the use of the sling, and could cast the stone with terrific force. I once saw a man throw one of these stones with such force that it tore up the ground even at a distance of about one hundred yards. One can quite imagine how easily one of them would penetrate the enemy's skull.

The stones were greatly prized, and after every encounter the combatants sought for them on the field of battle.

The slings (sepit) were made of native cord ; they were about a yard in length and were fitted with a broader part in the middle, in which the stones were fixed. The stones were stored in a pouch, which was worn in front of the body and secured in its place by a piece of netting tied round the waist.

The Loyalty Island spears (jo) were long, straight pieces of hard wood, neither barbed nor poisoned, except that sometimes the bone from the sting-ray fish was neatly attached a little distance from the point. It was supposed that a mere prick from one of these bones was sufficient to cause the death of an enemy. Spears were poised and thrown with great force by

the help of a looped cord (sep) worn on the second finger of the right hand.

A certain medicine was always in great demand by these warriors on the eve of battle. It was concocted of several ingredients known only to the medicine men. They mixed it in a small hole in the ground, after which they retired a short distance, watching the medicine carefully the whole time. If a lizard went to it, and seemed to moisten it with its saliva, the men were delighted—it was the best possible augury, and they believed that by drinking the whole concoction the warriors would certainly come off victorious in their anticipated encounter with their enemies. This procedure was the more remarkable when we remember their great abhorrence of all kinds of lizards.

Before fighting, or going on a long journey, the Lifuans made vows (xepu), and symbolised them in various ways; the most common was by leaving a tuft of hair—"emou"—to grow until the vow was accomplished.

Whenever a number of natives decided to take a vow for the achievement of some great object, but felt that they had not sufficient confidence in each other's fidelity, they put each other to the test in the following manner. They fastened themselves together by a very light vine, which they passed around their waists; then, marching abreast, they walked up the face of a steep rock. If any one of them stumbled, he broke the slender cord that bound them together, and this indicated that the one who had slipped would have broken his vow, and therefore he was considered unworthy to form one of their number.

CHAPTER XI

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, AND DEATHS

IN common with the rest of mankind, one of the most important and interesting events in the lives of the Loyalty Islanders was the birth of a child. Now was the time for the women to come forward and show their skill. Months before the event took place the young wife was subjected to much painful, cruel, and humiliating treatment. She was also put on a special diet, of which charcoal and a species of uncooked clay formed an important part. If, however, she expressed a very strong desire for certain foods or fish, no trouble was spared in procuring them for her ; not out of consideration for her, but to avoid evil consequences to the unborn child.

When the critical time arrived, the nurses and female friends went off with the expectant mother to a quiet place in the bush ; the husband and his male friends took up their position at a discreet distance so as to be within call.

A stout rope had previously been prepared, and suspended from a strong branch of a tree. It was to this the young wife would cling for support, whilst kneeling on the ground, whenever her sufferings should become more than she could otherwise bear. Failing a rope, a friend offered her services and took

up her position behind the kneeling patient, stooping over her and holding her under the arms, so that the sufferer was able to throw her arms over her own head and round the neck of her friend, where she clung until her pain was over. This was, however, a terrible strain for the nurse or friend, whose neck and shoulders were often stiff for many days afterwards.

Much unnecessary cruelty was inflicted for the supposed good of the patient and the unborn child by the nurses and mothers, who, being older in years, were supposed to have more wisdom and experience.

If all went well, everyone congratulated herself; but if not, then had the young wife to bear all the blame. She was scolded, insulted, and struck in the face, because, said they, she was lacking in courage or failed to put forth sufficient effort.

If, however, in spite of all the women could do, labour was prolonged, they decided that someone had sinned, and believed the child would never be born until full confession was made. Often enough there was nothing of a serious nature to confess; but something had to be done or the child would be lost; and so, to satisfy their tormentors and hasten the coming event, imaginary sins were said to be occasionally confessed.

Directly the child was born the women gave a peculiar loud cry which told the men that the great event was over. Sometimes the news was received in sullen, frigid silence, for the nature of the cry had told them a *girl* child was born to them; but a different cry was received with the utmost satisfaction and joy, for it proclaimed the birth of a man child, and

another possible warrior to augment their fighting staff.

But at this period there were many dangers and perils to be guarded against. All instructions must be followed with the minutest exactitude, to ensure robust health and happy lives to the mother and child. The mother must return to her little hut, taking care that her breasts and loins were well covered, otherwise her little one would cry its eyes sore. She must enter her house through a small door specially prepared for her, and no eyes except those of her attendants may behold her.

The little one was not washed, but gently rubbed all over with warm, soft wood ashes. In these days the children are washed. (I saw one, perhaps an hour old, having its first bath. The child was lying quite naked on a mat on the floor of a half-darkened hut. The bath was an old two-pound preserved meat tin, partly filled with warm water. The little body was quivering with cold, and the child was showing its disapproval by screaming with all its might, but the nurse calmly went on dipping her hand into the water, and sprinkling and wetting the miserable little infant, who at such an early age was paying the penalties of civilisation.)

One of the duties of the nurse was to press the child's head into the orthodox shape, between two warmed soft leaves; to cut the umbilical cord with a fragment of clam (ate kano) shell; failing this, she did not hesitate to bite the cord in two with her teeth; all impurities were *sucked* by the nurse from the little nose, mouth, and small breasts; she pinched the nose that it might not be *too* flat; and finally she pulled out a few hairs from her own head, and laid

them over the child's to ensure an abundant crop of hair.

After the eighth day, mother and child were anointed with a mixture of burnt banana, burnt coconut, and some scrapings from a sweet-smelling tree called "Xutrupet," after which the child was well wrapped up, leaving the head only quite free. When the umbilical cord (weneimie) dropped off, the nurse felt that she might safely leave the child to the care of the mother; and so she and the other attendants performed their last office, the object of which I have never been able to find out. The child was placed on the ground, and all his nurses bent over him as though they would give him their benediction, but instead of this, they suddenly and simultaneously gave a tremendous yell which greatly startled the child, after which ceremony they took their leave.

As the days passed, and the child grew stronger, the mother ventured to take her first bath or wash. Here again great care was necessary, for the slightest deviation from the recognised order would probably cause some calamity to fall upon her offspring. It was necessary, when she came out of the water, to gird herself very deliberately with her fringe skirt, beginning at the *left* side, and passing it very slowly round to the right, then saunter up to her little hut. Just before going to bathe, she and her child will have taken certain prescribed medicines, so that by this time she feels they are both inwardly and outwardly clean; their days of purification are over; they are now free to present themselves to society, and to take part in the feast made in their honour and called "the feast of eating the baby."

Every mother nursed her own child, but if for a

time she found she had not sufficient nourishment for him, she fed him with the bitter juice from *very* young coconuts. She was careful to open these nuts with a piece of new wood ; then, to prevent her little one from having sore eyes, she threw the wood, the husk, and the kernel of the nut into the fire.

To encourage the natural flow of milk, the mother rubbed her breasts with the leaves of the wild fig tree, and nourished herself with large quantities of coconuts.

The women would often have had easy and almost painless times during childbirth if they had allowed nature to do its work alone ; now that there is less interference we sometimes hear of the birth of a child during the night—the father sleeping in the same hut knowing nothing about the event until it is over, and the mother having been her own nurse and attendant ; moreover, she will probably go down to the sea and have a bath the next morning.

For several weeks after the “ feast of eating the baby,” many visitors would arrive to bid him welcome. If the child, when sleeping, placed his closed fists under his cheek, the mother regarded it as a sign that a visitor would arrive with a present, and the clenching of the child’s fists near the shoulder suggested the holding of an axe, at the end of which the present would be hung ; if the child crossed his arms over his breast and clenched his fists, the present would be brought hung over the shoulders in the same way that the women carried their burdens ; none would pay a visit of welcome empty-handed.

In spite of all the trying ordeals through which women had to pass, child-bearing has never been unpopular ; quite the contrary.

Alas ! for the poor woman to whom this honour had been denied. Many times she had to bear the brunt of her husband's anger, and the weight of his thick stick ; but even these were light afflictions compared to her own feelings of shame, since she was denied the luxury of motherhood, and of hearing herself addressed as " nyipo "—" you two," mother and child ; having to content herself as best she might with the term " nyipë "—" you alone," you, childless wife. Even a still-born child was better than none, for henceforth the woman, or mother, would be called " nyipo."

There were very few illegitimate children, and they, like mutes, were looked upon as possessing more evil propensities than usually fell to the ordinary mortal. To avoid becoming the mothers of such despised members of the community, abortion was sometimes practised by the women. With this object in view, they drank certain medicines, carried unusually heavy loads for several miles, or sprang from high rocks into the sea, falling face downwards.

The old custom of calling the mother " Mother of So-and-so," instead of giving her her own name, still survives. I have heard a woman addressed as " Mother of Xupa " even after her son Xupa had been dead for some years.

Ten or twelve children were generally born to each mother, but owing partly to the quality and quantity of medicines given—for all children, weak or strong, were lavishly dosed—and partly to the lack of any observance of hygienic laws, only a small proportion of these children reached maturity.

(I knew a strong, healthy boy about eight years of

age who was dosed by his grandmother and poisoned. The old woman admitted the child was perfectly well ; but that he might be even better she gave him her medicine. The death of the child was accounted for by the fact that the medicine had been mixed in cold water instead of warm, or *vice versa*.)

A child was nursed by his mother for two or three years ; but he was often left in charge of the grandmother whilst the mother worked in her plantation. Should he become restless and hungry, the old woman gave him her breast to comfort him, and, incredible as it may appear, she has been known to nurse and nourish him herself, even after being childless for ten or twelve years.

No ceremony was performed in naming the child ; he generally received one name only, the name of one of his paternal relations. If one child died, his name was often bestowed on the next in age, should he be of the same sex ; his own name being entirely dropped. An eldest son generally took the name of his deceased father, and often whilst the father was still alive he took upon himself a certain authority and superintendence of the younger members of the family. The Uveans often addressed him as “ Taben ” or Foundation, seeing that he was the basis of the family tree for the rising generation ; all younger sons paid tribute to him. They did more than this, they took upon themselves punishments for his misdemeanours, which would otherwise have fallen upon his head.

Girls were exempt from paying tribute to an elder brother, probably because they were not legally entitled to own any of their father's land.

Many parents, whose children were all boys, often

adopted a little girl to be as a sister to them. She was regarded and treated exactly as one of the family.

A marked feature of the present day is the serious fall in the birth-rate in native families of every class. This is certainly not due to any Malthusian practice. It is, as has been intimated elsewhere, a source of grief and humiliation to the married couples. Twenty or thirty years ago one rarely met a childless wife, but now they are to be found in scores in every district of the island.

Uncles and aunts were all called "father" (kaka) and "mother" (nenë) by the nephews and nieces; and they in their turn spoke of their nephews and nieces as "my sons and daughters" (ite neköng), and often the only way to ascertain whether a child was a real son or daughter was to inquire of the mother whether or not she had given him birth; cousins were all called, and regarded as, brothers and sisters.

It was a common custom among these Islanders to affiancé their children from birth, though this rule was not strictly adhered to. If, for instance, a girl developed more rapidly than a boy—and it was supposed this might easily come about if she ate food in the mornings, or sea-urchins at any other time—she could not be expected to wait until her *fiancé* reached the same state of maturity as herself; she might become the wife of another man without causing any ill-feeling.

At the same time the boy's development was well cared for. He was commanded to swim in the sea every morning, not for the purpose of cleanliness, but that he might grow up strong and healthy. He was forbidden to laugh and joke with other girls; because this might retard the growth of his

whiskers and prevent the speedy development of his body.

Young girls were urged to deny themselves altogether the pleasure of eating the large sea-urchins ; otherwise, when they reached years of maturity and married, they would never be able to keep themselves warm ; also they were forbidden to eat a young dove, if they knew that it was the only one that had been reared in the nest ; by breaking this law they were liable, after marriage, to become the mothers of one child only.

A girl was allowed to go about in a state of nudity until she reached years of maturity, after which custom demanded that she should put on the orthodox fringe skirt ; her ears were pierced, and her childhood's freedom was at an end.

As to the boy, at an appropriate time the father gave him some rather broad hints to remind him that as he had reached years of discretion it was quite time he should think about taking a wife.

The mother in the meantime had been looking round amongst the girls to ascertain their general qualifications, and especially to discover whether or not they were good gardeners ; and from amongst these she selected a few that she thought might be eligible. From this number the lad chose the one he preferred, and if he in turn was accepted by the other party, negotiations were entered into by the parents and friends. During the time of the betrothal there were no happy meetings alone between the lovers, who, indeed, had very little to do with the whole affair.

Occasionally, however, the young people managed these things themselves, and a maiden was made

aware that she was the object of a young man's desire by his sending her a present, such as a piece of native cloth, or a string of jade beads. If she accepted these, she tacitly consented to become his wife; and she knew that some night she would be roused from her sleep by finding herself pelted by a number of small stones which were being thrown through the small swinging door of her little hut. These indicated to her that her lover was outside and had come with his friends to carry her off. This custom was called by the Lifuans "Ixotesai"—"to run away with." The word is still retained in the language to express "betrothal."

When we first arrived in Uvea we found the mission premises were in charge of an old man and his family. His one daughter became my servant. After she had been with us some time her father came to us in great trouble and excitement, and begged us to help him in protecting his daughter. He told us that a number of young men had arrived from Lifu bent on carrying her off, much against her will. My husband was not well, so I offered to use my influence. I was a stranger to their customs, I neither knew the Lifuan nor Uvean language; but my sympathies were aroused on behalf of the old man and his daughter.

I accompanied him through the dense darkness to his little hut, which was inside our premises. I must confess to some feelings of dread, as, stooping down, I looked through the little door into the fire-lighted hut, and dimly discerned the dark forms of about twenty savage-looking men, in all their war-paint. I found that two or three of them could speak a little pidgin English, and I at once began to

remonstrate with them in that jargon; but they were sullen and cross, they had come all the way from Lifu for this girl, and now she refused to return with them; moreover, I and her people were there to protect her. The strangers protested that they wanted *this* girl, and no other. *I* also wanted the girl, and no other. After talking together for some time, and seeing that I could not turn them from their purpose, also that they refused to leave, I cut short the interview by carrying off the girl to my home and locking the door. I learned afterwards that she had actually consented previously to become the wife of one of these men, and knowing now with what contempt they regarded all women, I think myself fortunate that we escaped so easily from this unpleasant situation. Imagine, however, my surprise to find one morning that the faithless maiden had allowed herself to be carried off during the night "Ixotesai" by another set of young men.

In these more enlightened days the mode of betrothal is somewhat modified, and the young man is expected to plead his own cause. Now, perhaps for the first time in his life, he feels so incapable of doing himself justice that he finds it necessary to secure the help of a friend, who accompanies him on his nocturnal visits—the lovers must never be seen together during the day.

This friend is not wanting in sympathy and delicacy, and generally takes up his position a few yards from the happy pair, and often pleads his friend's cause with great eloquence and skill. With what powers of persuasion the lover also talks to the girl! He promises faithfully that she shall have many good things in the future, also that she shall have dainty

food, including *all* the eyes from the fishes he takes, etc., until finally, being over-persuaded, she consents. But in case she should change her mind and he should be left desolate, he occasionally proposes to one or two other girls, and it sometimes happens that he finds himself the accepted suitor of more than one girl at the same time.

Some time ago a young man became enamoured of one of my serving girls. He lived about thirty-five miles away, and I learnt that he had been two or three times to this village intending to propose, but that his courage had failed him. Finally he secured the assistance of a friend, who came to me one evening and begged to be allowed to speak to the girl outside the house. She went to them, and returned in about an hour, quite heart whole, but greatly amused at what had taken place. She said the wooer had scarcely uttered a word the whole time, but his friend had pleaded very earnestly for him, somewhat as follows : “ You know this young man, and you know that his conduct has ever been all that could be desired. He belongs to the same district as yourself, and you would do well to accept his proposal ; he has come a long way on purpose to see you ; will you accept him, or must he return that long distance sad and disappointed ? Will you not consent to have him ? ” But the girl either remained silent or failed to give a satisfactory reply. Again the pleader went on : “ He has *never* proposed to a girl before, *you* are the very first (this was a great honour to the girl). Will you not take him ? You are young now (about 17 years) ; if you keep waiting you will become old, then no one will want you except the old men. Look at A—— (a girl about 22 years of age

who had refused a good many offers), she is getting old now, and no one wants her. *Do* accept this young man, I beg of you." But to all these persuasions the girl steeled her heart, and the interview ended. Another evening they repeated their entreaties, but all in vain. My sympathies were with the youth, who I knew was a good lad, and I imagined him sad and disconsolate, until I heard that he and his friend had gone straight from my girl to another one in this village, who, by the way, also refused him.

Even when the young people become engaged, all difficulties are by no means at an end. There are marriage settlements to be gone into, and if these are not found to be satisfactory to the friends of the girl, the whole negotiations often fall through. Not that the friends are at all anxious about the bride-elect; they are rather more concerned about themselves, lest they, who have brought her up and taught her to work, and who will now lose her services, should not receive a suitable compensation. Uncles and aunts, elder brothers and sisters, and cousins german, must be won over to agree to the arrangements before everything can be amicably settled.

When at last all obstacles have been removed, the lover takes the girl to his mother's house, where she remains for some time; in order to prove to her future mother-in-law that she thoroughly understands the arts of planting and tilling the ground, also cooking, and thus proving that she is a suitable helpmate for her son.

If the mother finds that she cannot approve of her future daughter-in-law, the girl is sent back to her own people, in spite of the protestations of the young man. I have heard that sometimes a young man has

been seen standing in the road, with the tears streaming down his face, gazing after the object of his affection, who was sadly leaving him for good. In such cases the mother rarely relented. *She* knew what was best for her son, she did her duty, and lost sight of the fact that her unwise interference might be the cause of much quarrelling and unhappiness amongst the young married couples in later years.

If in the olden days the girl proved herself suitable in the eyes of her stern mistress, a great feast was made, after which the marriage was recognised as legal and binding ; in these days marriages take place in the church, the pastor of the village officiating. It now only remained for the young people to drink plenty of native medicine, in order to avert all evil, and to facilitate child-bearing.

Unhappily for the health and morals of the people, this feasting is still kept up more or less. It generally takes place some days after the marriage ceremony.

All friends, on both sides, give presents to the bride and bridegroom, which gifts, however, are never intended for the young people personally, but to be handed over to their relations and friends ; often they are the cause of much jealousy amongst the recipients.

Although the news of the birth of a girl child was received in solemn silence by the father and his male friends, it still carried with it certain compensations, for as the girl grew older she soon became an important factor in her home, by taking upon herself a large portion of the work in the plantations. Moreover, when she married, her parents received a valuable marriage present, as well as a son-in-law upon whom, according to the custom of the land,

they could call for any special work, or if in any difficulties, whilst he and his wife were expected to see that the wife's parents were well supplied with fish, food, etc. I know an old man in this village who wanted some money, and so he sent word to his son-in-law (forty-five miles away) to send him some "rubber." Now the old man's daughter had been dead for some time, and, I think, another woman reigned in her stead. However, the son-in-law called his friends together and told them of the old man's request, and off they went into the bush in search of "rubber." They did not, however, care to carry the rubber the long distance of thirty-five miles, so sold it to a trader and sent the money to the old man—a sum of £9.

No girl ever entertains any fear of ultimately becoming an old maid; for even if no young man claims her, she becomes the wife of a widower. During many years' residence in these islands, I have known of one real native woman only who was unable to secure a husband, and this was probably owing to the fact that she was very scrofulous and slightly imbecile.

It is the recognised duty of all girls to marry—a duty they fulfil as a matter of course, evidently regarding marriage and child-bearing as the one object of their existence.

Directly a wife becomes a mother, her husband no longer speaks of her as "my wife," but "the bearer, or carrier, of my children"—"ifënekong." Neither do her parents speak any longer of her as "my daughter," but "the bearer of my grandchildren"—"ifëping." The children are of the first importance.

Widows and widowers of the commoners were always at liberty to marry whom and when they would, but the widow of a great chief lost caste if she became the wife of a man of lower rank than her former husband, and was looked upon with ill-favour by all loyal subjects of the late king.

The property of a dead chief was generally divided amongst his numerous wives and children, the land being reserved, however, for the males. Many of these wives ranked little higher than servants. They lived and worked together, not without much bickering and quarrelling ; but they were kept within reasonable bounds by wife No. 1, who usually occupied the same hut as her lord and master.

Among a people so nearly amphibious as the Loyalty Islanders one might surely expect to find a modicum of cleanliness ; but as a matter of fact the people were exceedingly dirty in their habits, that is to say according to our ideas of cleanliness.

Their methods of working, cooking, sleeping, the scarcity of good water, the absence of any large utensils for holding water, and their utter lack of any appreciation of the real meaning of cleanliness, all of course contributed to this result. It is, however, only fair to them to state that many universal European practices fill them with disgust and loathing, and we are often regarded by them with pitiful eyes as being ignorant of the common demands of decency. They are too polite to make this feeling too evident, but it is unmistakably there.

They bathed often in the sea, but owing to the practice of oiling their bodies, and the natural greasiness of their skins, this mode of washing was anything but effective.

Occasionally they washed their hands, by taking a mouthful of water and letting it flow out in a thin stream over them, rubbing them together all the while, just as we do.

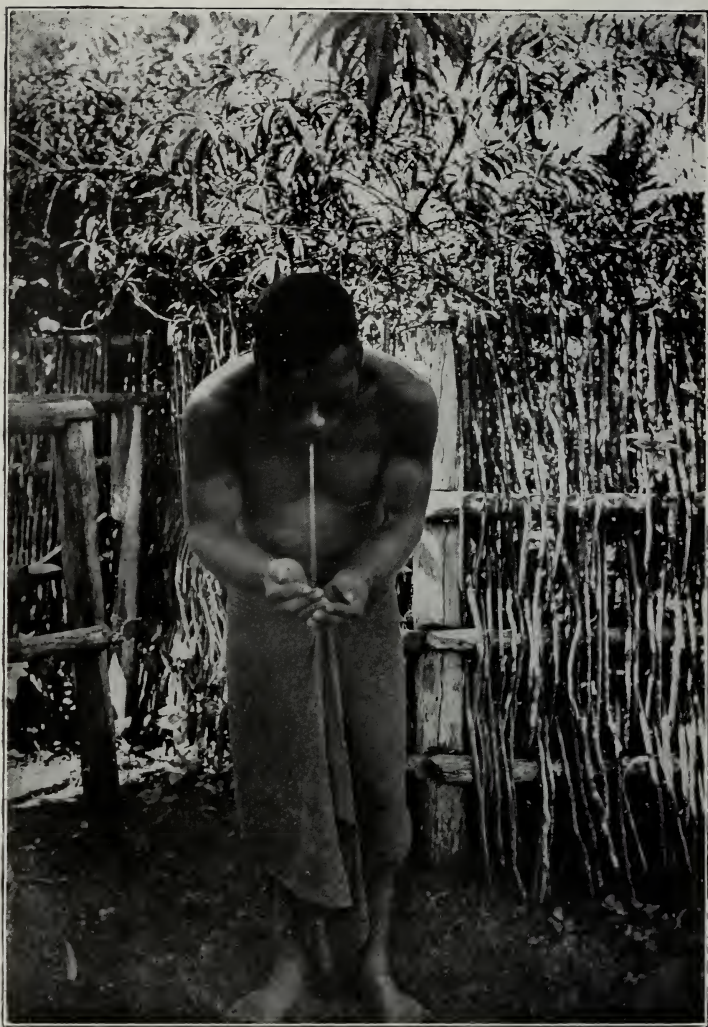
In spite, however, of oil, filth, and dirt the people perspired very freely, and after any unusual exertion they threw off an odour that was something to be remembered for its far-reaching double-distilled pungency. During the many years I have lived amongst them, I have never noticed what the late R. L. Stevenson calls "the hot, *clean* smell of men and women." I wonder whether he refers to the smell of certain sweet-scented woods, sometimes used in their houses as firewood, which clings about their bodies and is decidedly agreeable.

Few things were unclean to the natives of these islands. Running sores were left exposed, and ulcerous matter was allowed to accumulate and overflow on to the adjacent parts of the body; or, if wiped off with the fingers, it was either left to dry on the hands, or transferred to the nearest mat or tree.

Mucus from the children's noses was treated in the same way, or drawn off by the mother's mouth.

Lice were searched for in each other's heads, and cracked between the teeth with apparent relish.

But in spite of their neglect of all hygienic laws of cleanliness, these dirty, lazy, good-tempered people seem, by all accounts, to have enjoyed splendid health, and were almost entirely free from infectious or contagious diseases. But now, alas! with advancing civilisation have come consumption, leprosy, and many other foreign diseases, which are carrying off the people in great numbers; so much so that



They washed their hands by getting a mouthful of water and allowing it to flow out in a thin stream over their hands.

the population has fallen off considerably—at present it is almost stationary.

The principal ailments of the Loyalty Islanders were biliousness (sienemengöt), scrofulous sores (piangöt), boils (thewek), skin eruptions, headache, sore eyes, decline, “wewa,” and “igenua”; this last was a kind of fever, accompanied by local swellings, and, so far as I know, quite peculiar to these people. The swellings were of a purple colour, and were preceded by a bad headache. They were too painful to be touched, but, I am told, were never fatal. The disease disappeared after a time, if the patient avoided salt water and constantly bathed the parts affected in fresh water.

The “wewa” was described as a creeping sensation, passing from one part of the body to another, and finally settling in one spot, in the form of an abscess. Still another of these peculiar ailments was an absence of sensation. The nerves refused duty, and the body felt numb. Native medicines for these maladies seem to be losing their efficacy, and the people find that a few doses of Epsom salts or sulphur are usually more effective.

But although there were few diseases, there were many doctors, and each of these was a specialist. Their medicines were the common herbs and bushes that grew wild all over the island. Everyone was at liberty to gather and administer them; but they would be quite ineffective, as medicines, unless administered by the right person; even when the medicine *had* been given by the right doctor, its effects could be neutralised, or a relapse caused, if the compensation, given by the friends of the invalid, was below the doctor's expectations.

The power of healing by native medicine (dosinö) was considered to be hereditary ; it could, however, be bestowed on a friend, in payment for some special service rendered.

The leaves of plants were often chewed and spat on the parts affected (some cases of leprosy have of late years been almost certainly traced to this custom) ; other leaves were bruised and soaked in water, the water being imbibed in large quantities, sometimes bucketfuls being necessary to effect a cure. In cases of very young children, the liquid was poured into the mouth, eyes, ears, and nose to ensure the child having a proper dose.

Other medicinal leaves were soaked in water, and the water was poured over the body, making it delightfully cool and pleasant. But the favourite medicine, the one which was free to all, requiring neither doctor nor payment, was the water from the sea (time hnagejē).

This salt water was considered to be a panacea for the majority of ailments that man was heir to. It ought, however, to be taken in the orthodox way. The patient stood waist deep in the sea, and with a small bunch of leaves she, or a friend, laved the water into her mouth until she felt she could not possibly take more (from one to two gallons was considered enough for anyone), after which she waded ashore, and lay down under the shade of the friendly palm trees, to give the medicine time to do its work.

Occasionally, whilst resting, the patient became very thirsty ; and having foreseen this, she supplied herself with a little fresh water, which also assisted the action of the salt. The medicine generally took



DRINKING SALT WATER.

Salt water was a panacea for the majority of their ailments. It ought, however, to be taken in the orthodox manner.

effect in about fifteen minutes, either as an aperient or an emetic, after which the patient felt she was cleansed from all superfluous bile, and quite ready to gorge and enjoy herself again. But the people did not always escape so easily. Occasionally the stomach became so distended that serious internal injury, and sometimes death, was the result. But cases of this kind were very rare, and the disaster was usually attributed to other causes ; so that the remedy is almost as popular to-day as in olden times.

If a child talks in his sleep, he must have a dose of salt water. The children often object to this treatment, but there is no escape ; for the mother, in her anxiety for the welfare of her child, pushes his head under the water and holds it there until he is obliged to open his mouth, and so swallow a certain amount of water. Not very long ago a Lifuan woman adopted this plan, and when she released her child she found he was dead.

Head- and stomach-ache, and all bilious attacks, were mostly cured by this valuable medicine, which was also taken for cleansing purposes at almost every period and important event in a native's life, seeing that it had the high reputation of freeing the patient from most impurities, both internal and external.

There was one kind of headache, however, which was not amenable to this simple remedy ; and in this case it was necessary to call in a specialist, who generally diagnosed that some foreign substance had found lodgment inside the sufferer's head, and that, unless it were removed, the patient would certainly die. The substance might be hair, stones, or shells, according to the speciality of the doctor. His services were therefore requisitioned. He had, of course,

expected this, and had brought the magical apparatus, which consisted of a small bunch of leaves tied together, as well as a few small stones, shells, or hairs, as the case required. There would probably be many spectators, but in the bustle and excitement none would notice the doctor secrete the proprietary object—whether stones or shells—inside the bunch of leaves. He began the operation by commanding the patient to kneel down before him and close her eyes. He then gave her a smart switch across the head and face with the bunch of leaves, when behold, to the amazement of the onlookers, a small stone dropped out of the patient's head. This process was repeated as many times as there were supposed to be stones in the invalid's head (or in the doctor's switch), after which the patient was pronounced out of danger, and she herself declared the pain was quite gone; evidently a case of faith-healing. The stones were immediately burnt, lest they should enter a second time into the sufferer's head, and thus cause a recurrence of all the pain and expense.

A friend of mine suffered very much at one time from headaches, caused, the doctor said, by one or two hairs which had got inside. She consented to have them removed; but in her case the doctor was not successful in curing the headache. It may have been my friend's fault—I am afraid she was lacking in faith (she was the same woman who said she believed the moon could not restore good teeth for bad ones), for she told me she neither believed in the doctor's ability nor honesty, and that she had seen two or three hairs lying between his fingers *before* he performed the operation—hence the failure.

These doctors (tene dosinö) were a class distinct

from the "medicine man," or wizard (*tene haze*), who worked by the instrumentality of spirits or demons, whilst the doctors were all supposed to use medicines.

Sometimes the two arts seemed to merge into each other, and the magical element was introduced into the ordinary practice of medicine. A certain ritual was often necessary before the medicine could effect its cure; and, as already stated, the cure depended even more on the administrator of the medicine than on the medicine itself.

There was still a third kind of headache in which neither stones, shells, hairs, nor any such things had any part, the curing of which required strong measures and great skill. Something was wrong with the brain, and the doctors had recourse to trepanning.

The only surgical instrument used for this delicate operation was a small piece of bamboo cane, or a sharp shell or stone. One particular kind of stone which was in great demand for this purpose was found on the tops of the mountains of New Caledonia. It was brittle, and could be easily split into small sharp pieces, like bits of broken glass.

The operation of trepanning was as follows. The scalp was cut loose from three sides of the head and laid carefully back. The skull was then well scraped in the spot where the pain was felt to have been greatest. Before beginning operations, the surgeon had prepared a piece of young coconut shell, by scraping it smooth and thin. This was now fixed on the skull, to cover the portion which had been scraped. Should the patient happen to faint during the operation—for of course no anæsthetics were used—the surgeon complacently waited until

consciousness returned. A white man who once witnessed this operation performed at Uvea on a lad about twelve years of age described to me the process as follows. The boy lay down on the ground, and a cut was made on his scalp in the form of a cross, reaching almost from ear to ear. During the whole operation fresh water was dropping on the wound to wash away the blood. The piece of coconut shell used in this case was from an old nut, and about the size of a dollar piece. The operation occupied perhaps an hour ; when it was over the lad stood up, and, resting his hand on his mother's shoulder, walked perhaps one hundred yards to their own hut. The scalp was stitched with a needle made from the wing-bone of a flying fox and some of their own twine, which was fine and strong.

That this operation has in no way affected the boy's intelligence I can confidently affirm. He was one of the boys in our boarding school, and he is now one of our most valued pastors on New Caledonia. I think he can speak four or five languages other than his own, and he has been very useful in helping the French missionary to translate the Scriptures in the New Caledonian vernacular.

This boy underwent the operation once only ; but I have known natives of Uvea who have submitted to the operation of trepanning several times, until one might believe that nearly the whole top of their heads must be a kind of mosaic work of coconut shell.

Bruised bones were treated in the same way as the skull ; that is, the bone was scraped and a piece of shell applied.

In place of the lance of stone, or shell, a small

piece of broken glass is now used, even in preference to a knife. For boils and swellings a very neat little lance was formerly used. It consisted of a twig, about a foot long, cut from a particular tree which was supposed to be quite free from all poisonous properties. A part was chosen on which were one or two long thorns. The twig and thorn were kept well scraped and smoothed, in readiness for any emergency. The thorn was placed over the middle of the boil, and was sharply tapped two or three times with a piece of very light wood, so that it penetrated the flesh, but not so far as the bone.

Lancing was, and still is, a favourite remedy for all kinds of knocks and bruises, aches and pains, not excepting headaches, in order, it is said, to let out the bad blood. It seems to give the sufferer real pleasure to be able to say after an operation that the blood is black (*wetewet*), *very* black, showing that the ailment merited the operation.

Some time ago there was an epidemic of measles on the island, and many of the sick children became delirious. One man, a Lifuan, seeing his son in this state, attributed it at once to a surplus of bad blood in the head. Thinking to give relief, he cut his child's head to let out the bad blood ; but to his great grief his child died, whilst almost every other child recovered.

Many years after a knock or bruise has been received the accident is held responsible for certain aches and pains, especially if they happen to be anywhere about the head ; a part of the body which is regarded as specially delicate by the natives. They never attributed a headache to a disordered stomach. Every pain was supposed to be either caused by an

evilly-disposed sorcerer, or to have a distinctly local origin.

Should there be any long delay in the disappearance of the fontanelle of a child's cranium, the delay was attributed to incest on the part of one or both parents ; and it was believed that if nothing was done the head would become so enlarged that the child would either die or become insane ; but even for this the Loyalty Islanders had a remedy. The native surgeon made a cutting in the small head, and with his fingers probed about inside the wound until he reached the soft place, and over this he plastered chewed bush or leaves to cause the bones to cement.

Scrofulous glands—called “kumalos,” sweet potatoes—were invariably cut out by the surgeon with his primitive little shell lance. The tumour was held by the thumb and finger of the left hand ; then, probably ignorant of all risk of severing an artery, the doctor cut the diseased gland clean away. If the patient bled more profusely than usual, native medicines were plastered over the wound, to check the hæmorrhage.

There were also a few cases of elephantiasis, which were regarded as incurable, and which now, fortunately, seem to have quite died out.

Idiots and deaf and dumb persons were supposed to be bearing the penalty of the shortcomings of their parents, or were themselves obsessed by devils. A servant girl once told me that one of her uncles was insane and went about the village talking to himself. The natives thought he must be conversing with invisible devils ; and being afraid lest the man should gain superhuman power over them, they determined to put him to death. They dug a deep

hole in the earth, and ordered the man to get inside. At first, very naturally, he objected, but subsequently, after much persuasion, they got him into the hole. In spite of his entreaties, the villagers began to shovel in the earth, with their hands, until the man was completely buried. The people thought that by burying him they would destroy and bury the devils that possessed him.

Native doctors had a very plausible way of accounting for every kind of disease, except decline. This gradual wasting away of the body without pain, and with no apparent cause, was a great mystery to them; there seemed something so uncanny about it that everyone decided the patient must be obsessed by demons; and although as a rule natives were exceedingly kind to their sick ones, in this case they were so terrified that they refused to enter the house of the invalid, or even, in some cases, to supply him with food.

Sore eyes were supposed to be inflicted by departed spirits on those who dared to venture too near the place where their bodies had been interred.

The blindness of old age was no doubt accelerated by the constant smokiness of their huts, or by the different medicines applied to the eyes for the cure of ophthalmia, or from biliousness.

Pimples or hardness of skin on a child's body were said to be caused by the mother having eaten too much shark or papaw apple.

Massaging was practised by all, but more especially by the women. The latter's gentle and quiet patience in pressing and squeezing, in patting and stroking, and their cooing words of sympathy, were very soothing to the patient, and helped him to forget his

pain and often lulled him to sleep. The feeling of creepiness, of numbness, or of fatigue gradually disappeared under their soothing influence.

Tonas (yaws) were universal. They generally



CHILD WITH TONAS

Sometimes these sores covered the little body
from head to foot.

attacked children of two or three years of age, that is, soon after they were weaned, and sometimes covered the little body from head to foot with scab-like sores, upon which greedy flies feasted from sunrise to sunset.

Tonas usually disappeared after about twelve months ; but occasionally they formed large ulcerated sores which were most obstinate in healing. One method of curing these sores was to scrape off the top with a small piece of wood so as to let out the bad blood, and, as the natives thought, to hasten recovery. We have a gentler method in these days—we find a salve made from grease, powdered borax, and sulphate of copper is most effective.

Tonas about the mouth were particularly dreaded, not so much because of the pain they caused as the fear that they might permanently distort the mouth. “ Tona mouth ” was, and still is, a term of derision and scorn.

Another species of tonas attacked older and grown-up people on the soles of the feet. Some of these resembled soft corns or stone bruises, both kinds being very painful as well as difficult to cure. The soft tonas are now lanced, and the hard ones frequently disappear after two or three applications of sulphate of copper. Large cracks often appear on the soles of the feet, and give almost as much pain as the tonas. They seem to be due to the hardness and dryness of the skin. In some cases they obstinately refuse to heal ; in others they close up after frequent washing with hot water and many applications of oil.

Some natives are greatly disfigured by a form of skin disease which causes white patches of various shapes and sizes to form on their bodies, usually on their hands and feet. Since no pain or inconvenience accompanies the ailment everybody regards it lightly.

Albino children were looked upon with great disfavour. They were supposed to be the offspring

of the white owl and to possess the spirit of their father—the owl.

We have on Uvea a peculiar specimen of the albino fraternity. He is piebald from head to foot. As a boy he was often about our mission premises, and always regarded by the natives as a kind of freak. Now he is getting old, and, strange to relate, two of his children have inherited their father's disfigurement. (Is this the beginning of a piebald race ?)

Intestinal worms were caused, as everybody believed, by eating too much grease and too many coconuts. They were never regarded as serious, and were easily got rid of by means of herbs. I do not know what has become of these medicines, whether they have died out or lost their power; but no one seems to know, in these days, of any cure for this special ailment, except that obtained from the white man's land.

The Lifuans always said that toothache was caused by eating wild plums—"wenemigöt." This fruit was very acid, and inside the seeds were generally found small grubs; these grubs were supposed to enter the teeth and to cause decomposition.

The natives had a most unique method of cleaning out the ears, and so curing deafness. They caught a very small insect—very much like a ladybird—and this they put inside the ear, closing up the aperture with bits of raw cotton. When they thought it had thoroughly done its duty—that is, had eaten up a sufficient quantity of cerumen—the cotton was removed and the insect allowed to go free.

Another of the old time beliefs of the natives was that if any woman during the period of pregnancy were to witness the tearing open of a crawfish



TWO UVEANS.

One is a piebald man, and strange to relate two of his children inherit the disfigurement.

(“ enehumen ”) her child would certainly be born with a hare-lip.

Near to the house of a certain descendant of the rain-maker of this district of Lifu there is to be seen a piece of flat rock, about two or three feet square, which is known by the name of “ Unegeca ” (twisted foot). It is commonly believed that if any woman who is expecting to become a mother should, inadvertently or otherwise, walk across this stone, she will give birth to a child having a twisted foot. My informant of this curious supernatural belief was evidently a firm believer in it, for she tried to prove its truth by telling me that the old man, who still lives on the spot, had a child, a grandchild, and the child of a relation, all born with this deformity. As a further illustration of native surgery, I am reminded of a very cruel method adopted to cure the deformity of one of these children, whose parents deliberately burnt the side of the foot that touched the ground in walking ; so that, to avoid pain, the poor little fellow was compelled to bring the uninjured part into action whenever he attempted to walk. It is said that the plan was a success : gradually the foot was strained to its natural position, and is now straight.

Fractured bones were usually manipulated as follows. First the flesh above the fracture was cut open to the bone. Then a quantity of chewed leaves from a tree called “ Luluman ” was spat into the opening. The limb was then bound up with splints taken from a particular tree named “ Thulamath,” and was so left until the bone united. If the “ Thulamath ” was not available, splints were taken from other trees, but the results were never so satisfactory.

There is now living in the village of Josip a very renowned native bonesetter and surgeon. He lays open the flesh of the wound as described above. In the case of compound fracture, this old man is said to remove all fragments of broken bone with his fingers, and to replace them by pieces of bone taken from the flying fox. Chewed leaves are inserted, and the whole bound up as before until quite healed.

This old man has the reputation of being able to straighten crooked spines. There is a woman now living in our premises who has been operated upon by him for this trouble. Her back is certainly quite straight now. She recently described to me the operation, thus: The old man cut open the flesh, and, inserting his finger and thumb, took hold of the crooked vertebræ and held it firmly. He then ordered his two assistants, one of whom stood at the head and the other at the feet of the patient, to give a strong simultaneous pull. While this was being done, the old man by some dexterous pressure or manipulation caused the vertebræ to return to their normal position. Native medicines were then applied in the usual manner, after which she was ordered to lie quietly on her back for a week or so. She was also instructed to do no work of any kind for a whole year. The operation seems to have been very painful, as one can well believe, seeing that no anæsthetics were used. The poor woman admitted having suffered agonies for some days. It is, however, a matter of common observation by Europeans who have seen much of the natives that they are far more capable of enduring physical suffering than the generality of white folks; they are undoubtedly

endowed with strong nerves, and are wonderfully stoical in bearing all kinds of pain the nature and cause of which they understand. It is not so, however, when they are attacked by some internal pain such as colic, neuralgia, etc.; then their fortitude entirely deserts them, and they roll about the floor and groan, and cry aloud in terror. One of our monitors was once suffering in this way. We recommended hot fomentations. Shortly afterwards his wife came to tell us that he was very angry, and threatened to strike her if she dared to attempt a second application of the hot blanket. On inquiry, we learned that she and a friend had each held the end of the blanket, and had dipped the middle part in very hot water—too hot for them to touch—and had laid it all dripping on the patient's stomach. His stoicism was not quite equal to this treatment, although he understood it well enough.

Some years ago an Uvean, while out in his canoe for the purpose of killing fish with a charge of dynamite, had the misfortune to blow off the greater part of his right hand with the explosive. My husband went to see him, and was surprised to find him sitting among his friends discussing the accident and showing them the extent of his injuries. It was obviously a case for amputation, but my husband had not the necessary surgical knowledge or experience to warrant his undertaking the operation. Seeing his reluctance, the sufferer at once enlisted the services of one of the natives in the hut, whose only recommendation was that he had once seen a similar operation performed. The amateur surgeon successfully cut off the shattered hand at the wrist, and with no other instrument than a butcher's knife,

using a pair of tweezers with which to take up the artery.

With the advent of the foreigner, and since the natives have been in the habit of going away as sailors, or to find work in other countries, many foreign diseases have been introduced, such as dysentery, measles, consumption, influenza, leprosy, etc. These maladies once having gained a footing were rapidly transmitted from one to another. The natives were, and indeed are to the present day, too ignorant and superstitious to attach any importance to the laws of hygiene, or to submit to any rules for the avoidance of contagion. To betray the least unwillingness to approach an invalid suffering from an infectious disease would seem to betray a shocking lack of sympathy; moreover, a native who absented himself for such a reason would be banned by the whole community as a conceited upstart. Public opinion is a terrible despot, and so it comes to pass that, in spite of all warnings, the natives still continue to crowd into the huts of their sick friends, eat and drink, and even sleep on the same mat, puffing at the same cigarette, and exchanging clothing. I once saw a mother take a covering from her child whose body was encrusted with "tonas" (yaws) and wrap it around another of her little ones whose skin was as yet quite clean and free from the malady. When I remonstrated with her she politely assented to everything I said; but, continued she—evidently feeling that I had misjudged her—"I love my child who has the tonas," meaning that her love for the child would preclude the possibility of any contamination of whatever may have come in contact with his precious body. Love is stronger than reason and

logic, and I have no doubt she believed that, however good my logic might be, I was woefully lacking in maternal affection.

A year or two ago a seat was set apart in our village church for the accommodation of five or six of the natives who were thought to be lepers by the local government doctor, and were strictly forbidden to eat or sleep or mix with the other natives. The first Sunday after the new arrangement, I observed that only one of the suspects had had the courage to attend the service. He was an old man, and had, of course, the whole seat to himself. After a little time, glancing in his direction again, I was astonished to see several strong, healthy women sitting on either side of him. Afterwards, on mentioning the matter to the pastor, and blaming him for not fully warning the people of the risk of contamination, he humbly excused their conduct by informing me that the women were "foolish," for they knew full well the risk they ran; still that they could not bear to see the old man sitting alone, as though he had no friends, and so their sympathy compelled them to share the seat with him.

As an illustration of the Lifuan's want of the logical faculty, I may relate the following story. A small community of lepers had been placed in isolation by the Government in a distant part of the island. After the lapse of a few years they decided among themselves that they were entitled to a holiday. They therefore sent a written message to the French *délégué* making the request; then, assuming that he could never be so unreasonable as to refuse the permission, they spread themselves over the entire district, each with his respective friends.

When the natives are overtaken by any severe malady, they exhibit nearly all the characteristic qualities of what a doctor would call a "good patient." They lie resignedly day after day, and week after week, on their thin mats, which are spread over dried leaves on the bare ground of their huts. Formerly the pillow was a log of wood on which the neck rather than the head rested; now a bag of matting is stuffed hard with dried leaves and used as a pillow. The friends of the invalid had very little notion of making him comfortable, at least as we understand comfort. They were not, however, lacking, as a general rule, in genuine heartfelt sympathy, which they readily conveyed to the sufferer by kind looks and encouraging words. At the present day, if one has some slight ailment, he is sure to be informed by his visitors that a great number of people are at that very moment similarly afflicted, and that is surely a comforting reflection. Their utter ignorance of hygienic laws in the past and their disbelief in them in the present day greatly retard their recovery from disease. No thought was ever given to ventilation. The poor patient, as I have stated elsewhere, would be rudely awakened—though sleep might be of vital importance—to greet a newly arrived friend. On the other hand, they would often object to his being disturbed for washing or surgical dressing. They had a very limited supply of invalids' food, and no doubt their sick often died of starvation: the only dainties available were certain tender herbs, very young taro shoots, the glutinous substance scraped from beneath the outer skin of the yam, boiled or baked papaw fruit, and the bark of a tree called

“paza.” (The leaves of the “paza” are often used medicinally by the French, who call it “bourao.”) But whatever the invalid might fancy, *that* his friends would do their utmost to procure, with no knowledge or thought as to its suitability or otherwise.

Less cleanliness seems to have been observed during the nursing of an invalid than on other occasions. It is almost an unheard of event to come upon human excrement in wandering about the villages. During illness, however, it is considered excusable to bury such matter in the hut, or to cast it just outside. Bed sores were frequently developed, and though they might be the nursery of swarms of blowflies, they were not regarded seriously. Bad odours too were regarded complacently in the sick-room: often the bed matting, etc., had to be destroyed by fire.

In cases of prolonged sickness, many doctors were called in one after another. The special medicine of each doctor was allowed only a short period to do its work. Unless signs of improvement were immediately evident, it was rejected as the wrong cure. The natives never seem to have suspected that Nature sometimes works a cure; hence the man whose medicine was being taken when health was restored received all the credit, and gained a reputation for the future. If all the known doctors prescribed their special nostrums and no improvement took place, the disease was pronounced incurable, and everyone concluded that the patient would die.

Messages were then sent to distant friends and relatives to come and bid their last farewell. The utmost urgency was attached to this ceremony, and no one would care to neglect it. Each visitor

brought with him a present for the sick man, and received one in return. The present, under ordinary conditions, would have been a source of intense pleasure to the sick man; now, alas! he knows it to be the harbinger of death.

Friend after friend arrives, and the patient is



“ I will meet you all again in the caves where the stalactites are.”

aroused from sleep or stupor to bid them “ Good-bye.” He knows that he is expected to die, and rarely kicks against public opinion; but silently and uncomplainingly he bows to the inevitable, saying to his friends as he passes away, “ I will meet you all again in the caves where the stalactites are,” such caves being held in great reverence as the abode of

countless numbers of the spirits of the departed. The moment his last breath is drawn a loud, sad wailing cry ascends from the crowd mingled with ejaculations of regret and dismay, or in praise of the deceased ; the most usual cry being “ E-ko-lo-i-ni ” (“ Alas ! for me ”). During many succeeding weeks fresh relays of friends arrive, sometimes even from neighbouring islands, to “ cry ” (teije) with the stricken family ; and having thus done what is expected of them, it is not considered bad form to join the groups of those who have already “ cried,” for a friendly chat or smoke.

I was once standing with a group of natives, when word came from a small cutter, which had just anchored in the bay, that a Lifuan young man named Helep had died in Australia. This was the second or third time we had received reports of his death, which had been afterwards contradicted. The report seemed to be genuine this time ; and one of the bystanders turned to a little old woman, saying, “ Helep is dead ; you are one of his relations, go and ‘ cry ’ with his friends.” To our surprise, the old woman became quite indignant, and retorted, with some show of anger, “ I am not going to ‘ cry ’ for Helep.” Being further urged, she exclaimed, “ We heard before that Helep was dead, and I ‘ cried ’ very loudly indeed ; I ‘ cried ’ as though he had been my own son ; and now, I tell you, I am not going to ‘ cry ’ again.” From all this it is evident that there is a measure of professionalism, not to say insincerity, in their display of sympathy.

But the grief of those near of kin to the dead was truly sincere. Often, as an outward and visible token of their inward affliction, they would bury their

most valued treasures with their dead ; others would burn down their huts, or refuse food, or remain unwashed, or tear down the lobes of their ears ; while their mournful wailing would be heard for weeks throughout the village. Usually, however, their mourning was of shorter duration, and within a few weeks many of them would appear as merry as children.

A fact very noticeable too among these islanders is their evident reluctance to talk of their departed friends, however highly esteemed and deeply loved they may have been when alive.

Another noticeable fact is their almost entire exemption from fear of death. At least if there was any dread of the " king of terrors " it was not much in evidence. They seemed to recognise that their time of departure had come, the gods had willed it so, or some sorcerer had put an evil spell upon them, and there was nothing more to be said.

Although the people were cannibals, they showed the utmost respect and reverence for the bodies of their own dead relatives. They had different methods of interment, and took careful precautions to prevent the body being stolen and eaten. Sometimes they buried their dead, wrapped in mats and securely tied up, inside their own houses, in which they continued to live. Other corpses were placed in almost inaccessible caves ; whilst others were placed in the canoes they had used during life, and buried under ground. In the latter case a careful watch was kept over the grave until the bodies were decomposed, lest they should be dug up and devoured. If a man had no canoe, and his friends wished to bury him in the ground, he was often

placed in his grave in a crouching or sitting position and covered with earth in the usual way. The place of interment was generally kept secret, often being known only to the two or three relatives who accompanied the corpse.

Nothing seems to have been known of embalming or otherwise preventing the decay of a corpse. Sometimes, however, certain medicinal leaves were buried with it ; but this only happened when death had been the result of a quarrel, and was intended to procure the death of the man-slayer.

To the mind of a native there was nothing repulsive or unclean about a corpse. A native once said to me, " Why should there be, seeing that it was once our food ? Your hands are not polluted by touching your food."

It may truly be said that, with the advent of civilisation, the natives have in some respects greatly degenerated. The white man's vices have been found much more attractive to many of them than his virtues. Although cannibalism, polygamy, terrorism and tribal wars have disappeared, the white man's demon " drink "—to name only one of his vices—would have proved more ruinous, morally and physically, than all these combined, had it not been checked by the restraining hand of religion and education. Whenever a native of these islands drinks—and it is said they all take to drink as to mother's milk—his one sole and undisguised object is to become intoxicated as speedily as possible.*

Then, too, their indiscriminate consumption of European food is playing havoc with their once

* Very few Lifuans drink ; perhaps not one-half per cent. of the population of 6,000 or 7,000.

robust constitutions, and rapidly destroying their hitherto magnificent teeth. European clothing also, which is put on and off at most unreasonable times and seasons, is doubtlessly an agent for the promotion of sickness and disease.

The dirty little grass huts of the natives are now gradually giving place to stone or lath and plaster houses. The people are beginning to appreciate the value of soap and water. There is now a well in practically every village in the three islands, while in nearly every house are to be found a few of our familiar household utensils, such as pots and pans.

Many of the parents of the present generation are also showing a commendable anxiety to secure a good elementary education for their children.

A few of the young men are worthily occupying positions of trust in the French colonial town of Noumea, New Caledonia, where, with very few exceptions, all the natives go to work for a longer or shorter period of time. Having thus been brought in touch with civilised life, many of the young men on their return launch out boldly on the seas of commerce, in competition with the white traders, and owing to their economic advantages bid fair to supersede them.

Their dried coconuts (copra), sandal wood, fungus, rubber, etc., are all rich sources of income to the natives ; but in seeking a livelihood from the traffic of these products, their easy going good-nature, generosity, extravagance, and communistic spirit are formidable obstacles to the amassing of large fortunes. The following example will give a little insight into native ideas of acquiring wealth, and of their childlike simplicity in some things. A number

of Lifuans decided to buy a cutter that they might commence trading in her between the islands and Noumea. To raise money for the purchase of the vessel they all went to New Caledonia to work for one year. At the expiration of this time they had not nearly enough money, but were allowed to have their ship on credit. On their arrival at Lifu with the new vessel, the owners consulted together, being determined to have everything in good order, and leave no future ground for misunderstanding. Accordingly they drew up a code of regulations, among which were the following :

“ All old people and little children are allowed to travel by this vessel free of charge, because such are unable to work for money.

“ Native pastors, and students for the ministry, are likewise exempt from payment, because they spend their lives for the good of others, and not to earn money for themselves.

“ The passage money to Noumea for an adult man or woman shall be fixed at ten francs. That of a pig at five francs.

“ It is required of every man who wishes to send his pig to the Noumean market that he should accompany it and care for it during the passage. Since, however, he goes solely on account of his pig, he need not pay any passage money.”

I think the board of directors began to suspect the wisdom of their regulations when they found that so many passengers who applied for a passage were accompanied by a pig. Certainly as a business speculation the vessel never made the money its owners had anticipated, though it did well enough as a chari-

table institution. It was finally wrecked before it had been wholly paid for.

Again : I once had occasion to buy a loaf of bread from a native storekeeper, the price of which was one franc. Although he was not one of our people, he was so gratified that a white woman should care to buy his bread that he stoutly refused the franc, apologising at the same time that the bread was not so good as he usually made. A few days later a second loaf was sent me with the request that I would accept it as a present, as a kind of *compensation* for the one I had already received.

I am told that the natives are cute and exacting enough in their commercial transactions with the European traders, and that they take the utmost pleasure in giving the impression that they are not behind the times in knowing all the usages of modern commerce. In their dealings with each other, however, they manifest a totally different spirit.

A few years ago two of our villages in the Lösi district decided that they would try the experiment of holding a market, exactly as they had seen it done in Noumea. The two principal articles of sale were to be yams and fish, because one village had an abundance of yams and a scarcity of fish, whereas the other village had a surplus of fish and a deficiency of yams. The market was to be held in an open space between the two villages, and on Saturday afternoons. Each party piled up its wares on its own side of the chosen ground, and business commenced in earnest.

A., a member of the fishing village, would walk with a stately tread across the intervening space to the yam stalls, and selecting a yam would gravely inquire the price. Then B., after looking at it fixedly

for a minute or two, as though mentally calculating its weight and quality, would reply, "Oh, just give me as much fish as you think it is worth," and the bargain was closed. When B. went to buy fish, the same formula was observed; and in this manner business flourished until the sun sank low in the horizon, which was the time agreed upon for closing the market. It frequently happened that neither side had sold out all its produce, and as no one could be so mean as to carry his unsold wares home again, each party handed over all that was left as a present to the other party. When all the fish and yams had been amicably disposed of in this manner, everyone went home, no doubt congratulating himself on the good bargains he had made, and feeling proud of his business ability, and the satisfactory manner in which he had conducted his share of the market.

One cannot help feeling a little regret at seeing that this childlike simplicity and confidence is gradually passing away with the advance of civilisation and commercial competition. Nevertheless, self-denial, good-humour, kindness, politeness, honesty, and trustfulness are still very conspicuous features in the native character, and many of the people promise to become useful, manly, and intelligent citizens.

And now that my reader has gained a more intimate knowledge of the past history and customs of the Loyalty Islanders, and has become more familiar with their mental, moral, and spiritual ideas, he will doubtless feel with the writer that these primitive races are entitled to our respect and consideration, and that a liberal and large-hearted charity should be employed by those who would truly estimate their character.

Whether we regard them in the light of past history or present conditions, we find much that is worthy of admiration. We cannot fail indeed to recognise that they have very much in common with ourselves, and to observe that the spirit of altruism is not the sole monopoly of the "white man from the clouds."

PART II

CHAPTER XII

LOYALTY ISLAND LEGENDS

1. *The Echo (Mekem).*

DURING one of the tribal wars at Uvea, a certain youth fled to the bush to escape the enemies of his tribe. After wandering about for a considerable time, he became so exhausted that he was obliged to seat himself on a piece of rock. Wishing to get a better view of his surroundings, he commanded the rock, on which he was sitting, to raise itself a little higher, which it immediately did. The youth, enjoying the sensation, said "Go higher, rock, higher," when the rock obeyed him as before. The people of a village close by, observing the ascent of the boy, hurried off in a body to try to rescue him from his dangerously elevated position. The youth, seeing the people coming towards him, and realising his wonderful power, called out excitedly, "Higher, rock, higher, higher," and away he shot up far beyond human reach, for the small rock had now become a towering elevation, standing almost alone at a height of about 150 feet.

The people of the village had no means of delivering him from this perilous height ; neither had the youth power to lower the rock to its original level ; therefore

he still remains aloft, the sole inhabitant of the bluff. He has a small plantation of coconut palms and banana trees which can be seen from below ; but in these days he never allows himself to be seen—indeed the only evidence that he is still alive, apart from the fact of his plantation, is that whenever anyone in the vicinity of his rocky home utters a loud call, his words are invariably repeated by the lonely youth.

The word “ Mekem,” “ Echo,” has its origin as follows :

There is a certain fossil shell, *Modiola mytilidæ*, frequently found embedded in the rocks at Lifu, the native name for which is “ mekem.” It is said that this particular shell responds with an answering call to whoever raises his voice to a shout in its neighbourhood.

2. *The Sapless Bamboo.*

In the old, old days, the Bamboo, the Sugar-cane, and the Coconut palm were all three brethren. They were the sons of the same father, a tree called Dui, and, like him, they were all tall, straight and sapless. One day, being out for a walk with their father, they came upon a pool of fresh water which was clear, cool, and inviting. Seeing this, the father said to his sons, “ Come, O my children, and refresh yourselves with a good drink from this pool. Bamboo, you are my eldest son, you shall have the first drink.” Now in those days the Bamboo was very proud, and always resented being told to do anything, even by his father. So he haughtily drew himself up to his full height and said, “ I will not drink now, but I will drink whenever I feel

inclined." The other two sons, however, profiting by the opportunity, took a long and refreshing drink, after which they all four continued on their journey, until they arrived at their destination. On their return homeward, however, the sun being now high, and the heat oppressive, the Bamboo became parched with thirst, and secretly, but ardently, longed for the moment when they should again reach the pool. On their arrival, however, to the dismay of the Bamboo, they found that all the water had dried up. Bamboo had lost his opportunity ; and as a consequence he is, even to this day, a dry and sapless cane, whereas the sugar-cane is full of sweet juice and the coconut of a delicious beverage.

He is now frequently held up as a warning to children who are inclined to be disobedient, whilst the conduct of his two brothers is extolled ; for are they not always full of sweetness, and refreshment ?

3. *The Worm and the Spider.*

In the olden days, a Worm and a Spider were constantly quarrelling and disputing together. The subject of their contention was often as to which of them was endowed with the greater share of wisdom and power. At length they agreed to put the matter to the test, agreeing also that the Worm was to have the first chance of displaying his wisdom and skill. Now the Worm was quite convinced that he could best injure his enemy by means of water, seeing that the Spider seemed to dislike it so strongly. He therefore caused the rain to fall in torrents for days together, hoping the Spider would be washed away and drowned. Looking up, however, during the downpour to the

place where the Spider was usually to be seen, he called out, "Well, my friend, how fares it with you, are you not yet dead?" "By no means," replied the Spider; for, behold, he had found for himself a cosy niche under the eaves of a hut, where no rain could reach him. At length the Worm had to acknowledge his failure to injure his enemy the Spider, whose turn it now was to try to devise some means for destroying the Worm. He also caused the rain to fall in heavy torrents, but on looking down he saw his enemy wriggling about in evident enjoyment, and like one who was more or less in his own element. Suddenly, however, the Spider caused the rain to cease, and the sun to shine forth with uncommon brilliance and power. This the Worm could not endure, and in a short time he was scorched to death.

4. *The Introduction of the Coconut.*

In ancient days there lived on the shore of Lifu a man, his wife and two children. The youngest child, a babe of tender years, was often left to crawl about the house, amusing itself in its own way, while the others were busy or absent. Two sea-gulls, observing the child lying alone and unprotected, pounced down upon him, and carried him off. The elder child, witnessing the theft from afar, gave an alarm, at which the parents came running to the spot. Alas! they were too late.

The birds flew away with the child to a distant island, where they left him by the side of a large fallen tree, after which they continued their flight. Now the sole inhabitant of the island was an old witch. One night, while sleeping in her little hut, she was aroused by

hearing a most unusual sound outside. Had there been other people living on the island she would at once have declared the noise to have been the cry of an infant. She did not leave the hut ; but next morning, hearing the sound repeated, she went outside, and looking around soon discovered the little stranger.

Now although this woman was a witch she was evidently gifted with a kind, maternal heart, for she took the babe and nursed him, and indeed became very much attached to him ; nay, more than this, she became so devotedly fond of him that, after a few years, she even determined to send him away from the island, for his own good.

One day she spoke to him of her intention in these words : “ My son, I love you dearly, but I do not think it would be well for you to stay here always. I am not as other women, I am only a poor witch ; therefore, because I love you, I am going to send you to your own land, where you will live happily with your own people. Also when you go, I will give you some of the delicious food which we have so often shared together, and which is the special property of our class, so that you may plant it on your own island, and continue to enjoy it with your friends.” Then the kind-hearted old woman set about making preparations for her *protégé’s* departure. She first procured a large calabash, or dried gourd, into which she placed some pieces of sun-dried coconut, for the boy’s sustenance on the voyage. She also added a whole coconut, instructing the boy how to plant it directly he should reach his home. Lastly, she placed the boy also inside the calabash. Before finally sealing it up, she said to him, “ When you feel the calabash knocking against the rocks, that will be a sign that you are nearing

home; and when it breaks open you must at once step out, and go to your own home, which will be quite near." She then sealed up the mouth of the gourd, and with the first favourable wind for Lifu she cast it into the sea. For some days it was tossed about by the swelling waves, eventually being flung against the rocks and broken. The boy, following the instructions given him by the witch, stepped ashore, climbing up the steep rocks and carrying with him the few pieces of coconut he had not needed on the voyage, also the whole coconut for planting. He had not gone far before he came upon a group of people, from whom he learned that there was a family in the neighbourhood whose child had been carried off by sea-gulls many years before. He went at once to the house, declaring himself to be their long-lost child. When he had finished relating to them all his wonderful story, he was received with demonstrations of the utmost joy. He then presented to them the coconut he had brought with him, but they, not appreciating its value, received it somewhat coolly and laid it aside. The boy, however, on seeing this, offered them some of the broken fragments to eat, which they tasted and found so palatable that they longed for more. Accordingly, the nut was planted and guarded with special care, and in due time the whole island became covered with numerous groves of coconut palms, which supplied the people with nutritious food and refreshing drink, as well as many articles of the greatest utility.

5. The Fate of the Selfish Sea-gull.

A Dove and a Sea-gull were once on very friendly terms with each other, and resolved to fly off together

on a foraging expedition. The Dove, who had very sharp eyes, soon noticed a yam lying on the ground. On pointing this out to his friend the Gull, the latter replied, "Yes, that yam belongs to me, I was the first to see it; you see I have a longer neck than you, and can the more quickly see objects lying about." The Dove meekly assented, though not fully convinced of the truth of the Gull's assertion. After a short time he again observed some food lying on the ground, and with an effort to overcome his previous suspicions, he drew his comrade's attention to it. Again, by some subterfuge, the Gull claimed it as his. This selfish farce was continued for some time until the Dove was almost famished with hunger. The two birds then determined to try what they could find on the seashore. Here again the Dove's sharp eyes were the first to discern all the tit-bits; which were, as before, claimed by the Gull. At length rebellious feelings began to agitate the heart of the little Dove, and noticing a large clam shell opening its bivalves in the shallow water, he cried out, "Now you can't possibly claim this as yours, for certainly it was I who first saw it." The Gull, thinking it might be good policy to yield for once, agreed, saying to the Dove, "Yes, this is indeed yours; but will you oblige me by taking all the other food we have found, and leaving this clam to me?" "Very well," said the patient Dove, "I am quite willing to do that." The Gull waited for the clam to open its jaws a little wider; then down he swooped, inserting his long bill between them in expectation of a delicious feast, when lo! the bivalves came together with a resounding snap, catching the head and neck of the greedy Gull, and holding him fast until he was quite dead. It is said that, from

that time forth, the Dove has always enjoyed an abundance of food, and that he has led a happy and contented life.

6. *The Matrimonial Dispute of the Sun and the Moon.*

In the olden times, the Sun and Moon agreed to form a matrimonial alliance. They lived together in harmony and peace for some time, the Moon diligently discharging her domestic duties. One day, however, she made an "itra" (native pudding), and after taking it out of the oven of hot stones and placing it before her husband, it unfortunately proved to be underdone. This so greatly angered the Sun that without saying a word he left his wife and went alone into the bush to brood over his troubles, and to devise some means of revenge. At last he decided what to do, and began to search for the leaves of a certain tree. Having found these he returned home with them, and made them very hot then suddenly placing them over his wife's face he said, "Take this as a punishment for your carelessness; never again shall your face shine as brightly as mine." The face of the Moon was so badly burnt that ever since she has shone with a greatly diminished splendour.

7. *A Lesson in Honesty.*

An old couple once lived very happily together in their little grass hut on the island of Lifu. They were both very industrious, and frugal; and in order to preserve their garden produce, they had partitioned off a small portion of their hut as a kind of store-room.

The old wife, with advancing age, had become rather deaf, and nearly blind, and for this reason she now rarely ventured far from home.

Two small boys once playing near the house noticed a bunch of ripe bananas hanging in the little store-room, and wishing to get possession of some of them, they put their heads together and concocted the following plan. Waiting until the old man had left the hut, the two boys called upon the old woman and asked if they might sing for her. She was very pleased and told them that, although she was somewhat deaf, she should like it very much. Then one of the boys began to sing as follows: "Lift the leaves gently, take some bananas, and go out at the other door; do not make any noise lest the old woman should hear you." While one sang the other stole the fruit. This trick was repeated more than once, until the old man, noticing the diminishing stock, began to accuse his wife of eating more than her fair share. She, however, positively declared that she had never even touched the fruit, and that, moreover, no one had been near the hut except two nice little boys. The old man, who placed the utmost confidence in his wife's truthfulness and honesty, did not feel equally confident as to the innocency of the two nice little boys. He therefore determined to try what he could do to solve the problem. He set a watch, and in a very short time caught the culprits in the very act, whom he chastised very severely. The Loyalty Island parents now say that children would have been dishonest to this day but for the punishment inflicted by the old man on the two naughty boys.

8. The Fruits of Disobedience.

Logotee was an old witch who lived with her small grandson on an island near Lifu. As her boy grew older, he often longed to try to spear some fish. But as he had no fish spear, and knew not how to get one, he made known his want to his grandmother, who at once promised to help him. She first took a small twig of wood which she placed on the sea-beach, close to the edge of the water. She then sat down, and, closing her eyes, said, "I hope to see a fish spear in place of this twig when I open my eyes again." She waited thus for some time, exercising her powers of witchcraft all the while. At length when she opened her eyes she saw lying before her a beautiful long spear, with its numerous prongs as hard as iron. This coveted treasure she at once handed over to her grandson, giving him at the same time strict orders to keep to the lee side of the island, and on no consideration to go fishing on the weather side.

The boy was delighted with his new spear and went off at once to try his skill, and soon proved himself to be a very clever fisherman. In this occupation, as time wore on, he gradually accustomed himself to stray further and further from home. One day when he had strayed much further than usual, and was just about to retrace his steps, he suddenly beheld a very lovely maiden standing by his side. This charming girl began to speak to him in his own language, telling him that she was the daughter of the Sun, and that she had sought him out and come to him in the hope that he would ask her to be his wife.

Charmed by her rare beauty and proud of her preference for him, he took her home with him, and

presented her to his grandmother. The old woman, on learning the status of the girl, seemed well pleased also, although somewhat anxious. Presently she said to her grandson, "Are you not afraid to take as your wife the daughter of our great chief the Sun?" However, she spread a new mat on the floor of the hut, and invited the young people to be seated, whilst she hurried off to prepare a sumptuous meal, which was intended for the nuptial feast. From that day they lived together very happily as man and wife. In the course of time a little son was born to the young couple, which added greatly to their satisfaction and happiness. Now Logotee, as I have said before, was a witch, and amongst other wonderful knowledge she knew the secret of making babies grow big and strong in a single day, instead of after many years of weary waiting. Soon after the child was born she took him down to the beach, and held him in a standing position, his little feet being in the shallow water. She supported him with her left hand in this position, while with her right she beat him with a bunch of coconut leaves. After an hour or two of this treatment, the newborn babe was able to crawl along the beach. Then she administered a second beating, when lo! he was able to stand alone; after a third chastisement the child was able to run about. Still, the treatment was continued until the boy was able to talk, when he said to the old woman, "Now then, Great Grandmother, you have done quite enough," after which the beating was discontinued, and they returned to the house.

Domestic affairs continued to prosper and much harmony and satisfaction prevailed in the family circle, until one day the father began to wonder why

he had been so strictly forbidden by his grandmother to visit the weather side of the island. Debating with himself that he was no longer a child, and that he had a right to go wherever he pleased, he resolved upon taking a journey in the direction of the forbidden locality. One day he started off to cross the island, and after travelling many miles he at length came to a sandy beach, quite smooth and clean, as though the foot of man had never yet disturbed it. Here he wandered about for some time, enjoying the novelty of his surroundings ; and just as he began to think of returning homewards, he became suddenly aware of the presence of some being in the vicinity. Looking quickly about him, he beheld, to his dismay, an extremely ugly woman, whose body was covered with scales like that of a fish. She wore a tattered girdle round her waist, and a bag was hanging from her shoulders, both of which articles were stiff with filth and dirt. She began at once to address him, telling him the object of her presence, namely, that she had the intention of becoming his wife. His grandmother's strict injunctions never to visit this locality now came back vividly to his mind, and he began to realise that he was now about to be punished for his folly and disobedience. He spoke not a word in reply, but walked dejectedly towards his home, the woman following close behind him.

No sooner did they reach his hut than old Logotee caught sight of the ugly and dirty creature, and knew quite well what had happened. She was extremely angry with her grandson, and said to him, " Through your disobedience a terrible weight of sorrow and misery is about to rest upon us all." She neither spread a mat nor offered any food to the unwelcome

stranger. The latter, however, waited for no welcome or invitation; on the contrary, she immediately assumed the fullest authority of mistress of the house. Seeing the man's wife and children seated on the mat, she hustled them aside, taking possession of it for herself. In fact, she made it quite evident to them all that she had come to stay and to rule the household. She settled down in her new home, and continued for many years to exercise her usurped power, at the same time rousing the bitterest feelings and most angry passions of the other inmates. Unsparingly she exercised her occult evil powers to thwart the honest labours of the family, even going so far as to bring about the death of every child that was born to the Sun's daughter. The poor mother was so greatly overwhelmed with grief, shame, and misery that she determined as a last resource to appeal to her father, the Sun, for help. Hearing her sad story, he readily promised to do what he could for her. First of all he selected and marked off a nice cool spot, some distance away from their home, instructing his daughter and family to settle there for a time. He then caused his rays to beat down upon the earth with such fierce violence that no living creature could endure the heat. The wicked ugly woman with the scales over her body, not having received any warning of what was about to happen, was burnt to death. After this the family returned to their own home and lived together in tranquillity the rest of their days.

9. *The Destruction of a Demon.*

Two little Lifuan girls were once out in the bush together in search of a species of native mushroom,

when one of them suddenly became very grave, saying to her companion that she felt conscious of the presence of a demon close at hand, and that, moreover, her ears were filled with unaccustomed weird sounds. "Tush," said her friend; "what you have heard is only the falling of rotten branches from the trees." In a short time, however, the noise increased, becoming distinctly audible to both the girls, who were now so much alarmed that they immediately started off for home. As they were running along, they were met by a hawk, who asked them why they were in such great haste. They told him that a demon was after them, on hearing which he simply smiled, and flew away on his own business. Soon afterwards they met a flying fox, to whom they also told their story; but he too flew away without offering any advice or help, and settled on a coconut palm close by. Still continuing their flight, the little girls next met a number of domestic articles—a long stick (cilate) that is used to arrange hot stones in the native oven, a pair of bamboo tongs (akofe) used for picking up the hot stones and placing them over the food to be cooked, also a calabash and a banana leaf—while overhead was to be seen a butterfly hovering about. All were curious to know why the girls were in such great haste, and whilst the terrified girls were hurriedly explaining the cause of their fear, the demon himself came rushing upon them, crying out with a loud, unearthly voice, "I will gobble you up; I will gobble you up." The long pole immediately stepped to the front and said, "If you even dare to touch the children, I will burn your mouth with my hot end"; at the same time the bamboo tongs threatened to thrust hot stones down his throat. The demon was somewhat taken

aback by these threats, and when at the same moment the calabash began to demonstrate by banging himself against a tree, he became so much alarmed that he was fain to seek a hiding-place in a crevice of a rock near at hand. The long pole and the tongs, however, were not willing to allow him to escape so easily. They rushed after him at once, but, owing to the darkness of his hiding-place, were unable to find him. On seeing this, the banana leaf came to their aid and, having ignited himself, acted as a torch for them. Then, too, the little butterfly came to their assistance by flying in the face of the demon. So hotly pressed was the naughty devil by these determined champions of the distressed maidens that he ultimately succumbed, and they were able to reach their homes in safety.

10. *The Carnivorous "Cainyo."*

Many years ago there stalked through the length and breadth of Lifu a veritable "bogey man" of the name of "Cainyo." Now "Cainyo" means "one tooth," but this man had many big and strong teeth. He and his satellites, who all bore his name, were said to be terrible oppressors; indeed they killed and devoured so many of the poor natives that it seemed, by contrast, as if they alone were the possessors of teeth, hence their name "One tooth," or the great devourers of the people. They are said to have demolished the whole of the inhabitants of one district, with the exception of one woman and her little son. These two survivors succeeded in preserving their lives by taking up their abode on the top of a high rock, climbing and descending it by

means of a stout rope; always remembering to draw up the rope when not in use.

Whenever the mother had occasion to go out in search of food, she usually left the boy in charge of the home, at the same time instructing him that if Cainyo should inquire for her he should say that she had taken the opposite direction to that which she really intended to take. The lad obeyed implicitly his mother's orders, and as a consequence she was enabled to reach home in safety. She varied her instructions so much, however, that one day it chanced that the lad made a mistake, sending Cainyo along the route his mother had actually taken. The poor woman was on her way home when she discerned her dreaded enemy in the distance and walking towards her. She was terribly afraid, and quickly looked about her for a hiding-place. Finding none, she threw her bag with its contents of shell-fish and crabs on the ground, and crept inside it herself, the crabs obligingly making room for her and refraining from pinching her. Cainyo had not yet seen his longed-for victim, but had been searching and lying in wait for her many days. At length, wearied by his fruitless efforts, he decided to give up the search and to return to his own home. Just as he arrived at this decision, however, his eyes caught sight of the bag of crabs lying by the side of the road. Here at least was something to serve for his evening meal, so he eagerly picked it up and took it along with him. Having occasion to turn aside into the bush before reaching home, he placed the bag on the ground, when to his great surprise he heard a human voice proceeding from it, which said to him in a commanding tone, "Go further away, further, further,

further." Hearing this command and seeing no one, the giant Cainyo, who had terrified so many, now himself began to be filled with dread and dismay, and forthwith took to his heels, leaving the mysterious bag containing his expected supper behind him. The woman, now seizing her opportunity, rushed off home, carrying her bag with her.

On reaching her house she began angrily to remonstrate with her son for his carelessness in thus exposing her to so a great a peril.

After having experienced such a narrow escape, she became too timid to venture away from her rocky home, until at last their supply of food was completely exhausted, and they began to suffer severely the pangs of hunger. All this time the mother was anxiously considering various methods by which she might rid herself for ever of this dangerous enemy. She at length decided on a plan, which she explained in detail to her son; then, shouldering her bag, she again ventured forth in search of food.

A short time after the mother's departure Cainyo again appeared at the foot of the rock, and demanded entrance. The boy told him that his mother had gone to one of her plantations, "but," said he, "if you are hungry, she told me to give you something to eat, if you should happen to call." "Oh," said the giant, "I am very hungry indeed." "Then," said the boy, "come close underneath, and open your mouth wide, that I may drop some food into it." Cainyo did as he was told, opening his mouth as wide as he could, when the boy quickly dropped into it a number of red-hot stones, which went down his throat and into his stomach, causing instant death.

The mother and son, having no other enemies to fear, passed their days in quietness and security.

11. *The Gluttonous Hawk.*

Far away in the bush in a lonely and deserted part of Uvea, there once lived a worthy couple with their two little daughters. Their plantations being at a considerable distance from their home, the parents were often obliged to leave their little girls alone. On such occasions, however, they always took care to leave them with an abundant supply of food, as also to warn them never to leave the hut during their absence.

It happened one day, while the parents were at their plantation, that a hawk called at the house, on pretence of a friendly visit, and having learned from the children that their parents had gone over the rocks to their garden and were not expected back until evening, the hawk determined to remain with them for a time for his own amusement and advantage. In the course of conversation he drew forth the information that there was plenty of food in the house, and after a time he suggested that they should all sit together and eat it. The little girls, being well bred and schooled in the generous spirit of native hospitality, readily assented, and laid out the food in the middle of the floor.

The greedy and ill-mannered hawk snatched at the food and devoured it so quickly that the poor children never got a single morsel. Whenever they picked up a piece of the food to raise it to their lips, the greedy hawk snatched it from them, at the same time often severely scratching their little bare arms and bodies with his sharp claws, making them bleed.

Soon after the food had all been consumed, the voices of the parents were heard in the distance, it being their usual custom, as they climbed the rocks, to call aloud and warn the children of their safe return. The hawk, on hearing the call, made a hasty departure, without either bidding the children farewell or acknowledging his appreciation of their hospitality.

The parents soon noticed the scratches on the bodies of their children, and when all had been told, they were very angry and troubled. Next day they seriously considered whether or not it would be safe to leave the children alone ; but, believing that the bird would not dare to pay a second visit, they went off as usual to their garden.

The hawk, however, who had fared so well on the previous day, was not able to resist the temptation to put in a second appearance. Again he alighted at the door of the hut, and obtained an entrance, after which he behaved almost exactly as on the previous day.

The parents on their arrival were astounded at the bird's impertinence in again visiting their home, and determined to discover some means of taking their revenge and putting an end to these unwelcome visits. After long consideration, they decided on the following plan. They shaved the children's heads, leaving them as smooth and shiny as their little bodies. Then, trusting this time to the reappearance of the hawk, they started out once more for their plantation, having left a liberal supply of food for the children. A third time the noxious visitor called, and again he devoured all the children's food. As soon as he had appeased his enormous appetite he

turned to look at his little hostesses, and was much struck by their improved appearance, greatly admiring their bald and shiny pates. He asked them many questions as to how the thing had been done, and finally requested them to try to improve his appearance in a similar manner. The two little girls very willingly complied with his request, and immediately set to work plucking out his feathers. They had nearly completed their task when they were interrupted by hearing the usual call of their parents; on hearing this signal, the hawk began to think he was making too long a stay. He therefore walked to the door and spread out his wings intending to fly away as usual. To his dismay, however, he found that he was powerless to raise his denuded body, and hurriedly tried to avoid meeting the parents by running along the ground. His efforts to escape were of no avail, and he was easily captured and killed by the indignant parents.

“Since the destruction of that hawk,” say the Uveans, “it has always been quite safe to leave our children alone in our huts. No other hawk has ever our been bold enough to molest them.”

12. *Filial Disobedience (A Tragedy).*

A married couple living at Lifu decided to leave their ancestral lands and to start a home for themselves in a distant part of the island.

In the course of time two children were born to them, both, to their parents' great satisfaction, being boys. As the children grew up to years of discretion, they were strictly and frequently warned by their parents not to visit a certain part of the

neighbouring forest ; though why their liberty was thus curtailed was never explained to them. Possibly owing to this prohibition, the boys, as is the nature of boys, ardently longed to visit the tabooed region ; therefore one fine day, when their parents had gone off to their plantation, the elder son said to his brother, “ Now is the chance we have so often longed for ; let us go at once to the forbidden spot and find out for ourselves what there is to be seen.” Accordingly they started off and duly arrived at the place. Looking about, they failed to discover anything unusual, unless it were a number of plants of the aloe kind, which they recognised as the same their parents often used as food. “ Ha, ha,” laughed the elder brother, “ now I understand why we were told not to come here. Our parents knew of this rich supply of food, but wished to keep it for themselves.” Saying which he began to dig up one of the plants with his hands. Before he had been long occupied in this work, quite suddenly a live animal sprang out of the ground and fixed itself firmly on his neck with the help of its sharp claws. It had the appearance of an immense lizard, an animal held in the utmost abhorrence by all Lifuans. The more the boy tried to shake it off, the faster it clung. It was too horrible to have this cold-blooded reptile hanging about his body, and immediately he began to howl at the top of his voice ; on hearing this, the reptile said to him, “ Oh, now you are crying. Why did you come here ? I never invited you, but I know of your disobedience.”

The two lads then hurried off in the direction of their home ; the lizard still clinging to the neck of the elder. They hoped that by this time their parents

would have returned from the plantation, but in this they were disappointed. Still the lad cried, and still the reptile embraced him. Later in the day the parents returned, and as they drew near the hut they heard the sound of bitter wailing. The mother of the boys, being filled with anxiety and evil forebodings, ran on ahead, saying, "I wonder what has happened to the boys?" No sooner did she catch sight of her elder son, however, than she knew exactly what had happened. In her sore distress and grief she cried aloud, "Alas! alas! my son, why did you disobey us?" In every possible way she and her husband tried to dislodge the loathsome creature from their son's neck, but all in vain. When the poor lad found that even his mother was powerless to deliver him from his enemy, he cried still more loudly and bitterly than ever; so acute did his fear and dread become that soon he fell to the ground and expired.

13. *The Deceitful Crayfish* ("Enehuman").

In a secluded coconut grove on the rocky beach of Lifu there once dwelt two orphan sisters. Early one evening they left their little hut in search of shellfish and crabs. They decided, however, not to go in one and the same direction; so the elder girl went towards the north, while the younger one took the southerly direction. The former soon had her bag well filled with an assortment of dainty crabs, and was just about to retrace her steps when she observed to her great delight a large "enehuman" (a kind of lobster or crayfish not usually found on the beach, but caught in fish traps in the sea). As she stooped

to capture her prize he said to her, " Throw away all the small crabs from your bag and put me there." Most willingly she obeyed, and started for home. On her arrival she found that her sister had also reached home, and with such a supply of small crabs as amply to serve for their evening meal. They therefore decided to put the enehumen aside for some future meal. After supper, the two sisters rolled themselves up in their respective mats as usual, and were soon fast asleep. During the night, the enehumen, leaving the bag in which he had been placed, stole over to where the elder sister was sleeping, and with his long arms picked out both her eyes. Not satisfied with this, he continued his malicious attentions until he succeeded in destroying her life, after which he dragged her outside the hut and partially buried her body in the ground. All this had been done so secretly that the younger sister knew nothing of what had happened ; but when she awoke next morning she at once missed her sister. She called her by name, hunted every nook and corner in search of her, but no sister could she find, and at length gave up the search with a sadly troubled heart. A few days later, as she wandered about the premises, she noticed a large swarm of flies buzzing about some object, and on going to discover what it was that attracted them she found, alas ! alas ! it was the body of her poor dead sister. She was terribly grieved and distressed at the horrible discovery, but what could she do ? There was one thing she might attempt, and that was to make an urgent appeal to the spirits of their dead parents beseeching them to restore to life her beloved sister. With this purpose in view, and acting at once on the

happy inspiration, she closed her eyes and earnestly besought their help. Behold, when she again opened her eyes, her dear sister was standing before her. Alive ! yes ; but blind and dumb. Again she closed her eyes and besought the spirits to restore to her sister her lost sight and power of speech, and immediately she was endowed with the missing senses.

It was a long time before the two sisters could muster sufficient courage again to venture forth in search of crabs. One evening, however, being overcome by the desire for animal food (" pi öni "), they determined to take the risk and set out on their expedition, as before each going in an opposite direction. The elder sister had not proceeded far before she met her former enemy, the enehumen. Either he failed to recognise her, or else he was sadly lacking in intelligence, for he at once accosted her, and attempted to beguile her as before. This time, however, the girl was not to be so easily imposed upon. She blankly refused to empty her bag of its contents, and even declined to place him therein with them. She had, however, no intention of allowing him to escape ; accordingly, she commanded him to march on in front of her in the direction of home. On and on they went until, owing to the roughness of the road, one of his arms dropped off. At this he begged earnestly to be placed in the bag. She stooped down, but instead of picking him up, she picked up the dismembered limb, and dropped that into her bag, saying at the same time, " March on, enehumen."

The way was very long and rugged, and the enehumen was so weary that soon another arm dropped off, then a leg and another and another until the wretched

creature had hardly a leg to stand on. Most piteously and humbly he begged to be carried, but the sister, remembering how cruelly he had treated her, steeled her heart to his appeals and coldly said, "No, indeed; I shall do no such thing. Pray march on and don't distress yourself about all your loose limbs. I have them all in my bag, and intend to cook them presently for supper." This was poor comfort for the enehumen, who, however, struggled on until his last leg dropped off and he could not go any farther. Then the girl picked him up, and on reaching home she and her sister cooked and ate him at their evening meal.

Thus the clever and courageous girls saved the eyes and even the lives of future generations of Lifuans: for no enehumen has since those days had the audacity to practise his guileful tricks on human beings.

14. *The Sad Effects of an Evil Temper.*

A Lifuan woman, who lived quite alone in a remote part of the island, was one day collecting sticks for her fire when she happened to notice a beautiful bright red fruit growing on the top of a very high rock. It looked so delicious and tempting that she at once began to climb the rock so as to examine it more closely. It proved to be something quite new to her; and after she had ventured to taste it, she found it of such delicious flavour that she ate it all up. She suffered no ill-effects, but found soon afterwards that she was about to become a mother. In due time she gave birth to a little son, when her happiness and pride knew no bounds. A male child was a treasure

indeed, and she determined in her heart to keep him entirely to herself. He grew up to be a fine, healthy boy, never leaving his mother's side until he reached the age of about fifteen, when she, hearing that there was to be a great tribal feast at a distant village, determined to attend it. The lad, on learning from his mother of her intention, begged to accompany her, but, much as she disliked the separation from him, she stoutly refused the permission. He began inwardly to rebel at this harsh refusal, and as soon as his mother had started for the feast, he set his wits to work to invent some plan by which he might be present, without being recognised. At length he decided what to do. He took some of the fruits of the tree called "Hnyimë" and stained his body, which was much lighter (or as the natives say "redder") than that of most boys, with the juice. Thus having darkened his skin, he set out for the feast. He noticed that his mother had already arrived, and that she seemed to be enjoying herself with the good things provided. At length, when she had thoroughly gorged herself and felt more at leisure, she began to scrutinise her fellow guests. Her eye soon fell on the form of a fine-looking youth, who, if he had not been so dark, might easily have been mistaken for her own boy. She watched him for some time, and at last became so suspicious that she hurried back to her home to ascertain if he were there. Her son, however, seeing her intention, managed to reach home before her, and, having washed himself, was looking much as usual when she arrived. She felt greatly relieved at finding him where she had left him, and soon began to talk to him about the feast, telling him amongst other things of the lad that so

greatly resembled him. Then, not yet fully assured in her own mind, she asked him if he had been present. At first the lad boldly asserted that he had never left the place; but thinking better of it later on, he confessed that he too had been present. The mother on hearing this flew into a terrible passion, and in her anger said such cruel things that the boy in turn also became angry and sullenly told her that he could no longer stay in the home with her, that he would go away at once and find a home elsewhere. This was no idle threat. In spite of the entreaties of his mother, who now recognised that she had foolishly allowed her temper to get the better of her, he persisted in his resolve; even refusing to be reconciled when she offered him all the treasures she possessed. He therefore left their little hut, and climbed up the steep rock where his mother found and ate the red fruit, and whence he had had his own origin. There he transformed himself once more into the bright red fruit. His mother, who had been following him at a distance, soon came to the rock, and again seeing the fruit, she tried to pluck it; but it was too fast for her. She put forth all her strength, but in vain; she then tried to break it free with stones, but could make no impression whatever. And so the foolish mother had to return to her home sorrowful and dejected, and to live a lonely, childless life to the end of her days, remorsefully acknowledging that her own evil temper was the sole cause of her misery.

15. *The Tragic End of the Dove's Grandmother.*

A dove and a pigeon, who were both descended from human ancestors, and who had become very

friendly, one day resolved to take a long journey together. Before starting they each invited their respective grandmothers, who were both human beings, to accompany them. In addition to this, the pigeon also took with him a rat who was an old friend of his. After they had journeyed together many, many miles, they began to feel very hungry, and called a halt in order to scour the neighbourhood in search of food. Their efforts, however, were fruitless: not a scrap of food could they find anywhere. At length matters were getting so serious that they began to feel desperate, and the wily pigeon began to plot some scheme for their relief. After a time he said to his friend the dove, "A very good idea has just occurred to me, by means of which we may save our lives; but before I make it known to you, I want you to pledge yourself faithfully to carry out my instructions." To which the innocent little dove at once replied, "Yes, certainly; I will do whatever you tell me to do." The pigeon then explained his plan for the relief of their hunger, which was as follows: that they should each of them peck out his own grandmother's eyes, and eat them, after which they would be strengthened to proceed on their journey. The gentle dove was shocked at the cruelty of the suggestion; but alas! he had promised, and it had never been his custom to go back on his word. Therefore, with a sorrowing heart, he went to where his grandmother was sitting, and as gently and kindly as possible told her of his rash promise, and how greatly he was troubled about it. To his great surprise she did not raise the least objection. She said that, of course, he would be obliged to keep his word, and that she would like him to gouge out her eyes with

a small stick of wood, which after much hesitation he did.

Now the cunning pigeon had no intention of injuring *his* grandmother. From the very first he had secretly determined to sacrifice only the eyes of his old friend the rat, which he had done during the dove's absence.

The two birds, the one in mirth, the other in sadness, ate their food, the pigeon declaring that he had never enjoyed anything so much in his life (for, as everyone knows, eyes are a dainty morsel). Having finished their meal, both birds flew off in search of the old folks. As they neared the trees under which they had left them, they each began to call their respective grandmother by name, but received an answering call from one only. Alas! for the poor dove; the reason was soon obvious enough, his grandmother lay dead on the ground. Who shall describe his grief and remorse, he who would never have entertained the thought of hurting a hair of his grandmother's head. He immediately lifted up his voice and rent the air with his loud lamentations. Even to the present day he has not ceased to mourn her loss; and you may hear him many, many times every day giving vent to his sad mournful sobs— "Ku hoo, ku hoo, ku, ku, ku. The wicked and unsympathetic pigeon, however, was so delighted at the success of his stratagem, and at finding his grandmother alive and unharmed, that even to the present day he does little but sit and laugh all day long, relieving his mirthful feelings by uttering his well known call "Ho,o,o,o-hu hu hum."

16. *The Plot of the Octopus to Destroy
Domestic Harmony.*

A young Lifuan and his newly-wedded wife once decided to build their hut and settle down on the shore of one of the lovely little bays or coves which form such a picturesque feature of some parts of the island. Here they dwelt very happily together for a time ; the husband employing his time in making fishing tackle, fish traps, canoes, etc., whilst the wife worked in the plantation, cooked the food, and occasionally waded out to the reef in search of shell-fish of various kinds to cook in her " itra," and which supplies that delicate fishy flavour so much relished by the natives. One day when the good wife was engaged in this last-named occupation, wading about the reef, she was attacked by a vicious, evil-looking octopus. He proved to be no ordinary member of the octopus species, for he was evidently obsessed by a " haze " or evil spirit, and was able at will to change himself into various forms, and to do many other extraordinary feats of sorcery. He did a thing now which no octopus had ever done before, for he swallowed the woman whole, and swam away with her into the depths of the sea. Knowing that she was expecting soon to become a mother, and in order to thwart her cherished hopes, he also swallowed a large and heavy stone which he found lying among the tangled weeds. This was intended in some mysterious way to change, if not to destroy, her expected offspring. In course of time he arrived at the shore of an uninhabited island, where he disgorged his human freight, and left her to her own devices. The unfor-

fortunate woman, so suddenly snatched from home and happiness, at first began to weep ; but soon realising that she was uninjured in limb, and apparently no worse for her strange misadventure, she decided to make the best of her circumstances, and at once began to explore the island and make her plans for the future—chiefly in the interests of the expected babe. She found the place was overgrown with thick bushes and lofty trees ; much the same as her own island, though, unlike Lifu, it appeared to be quite destitute of stones. This was a serious drawback, for it would hinder the making of native ovens in which to cook her “itras.” However, she had to think first about the construction of a hut, and having observed a wide-spreading banyan tree (sa) under which she determined to build, she began to collect long sticks, leaves and grass, and such like materials, cheered by the thought that here her child was to be born, who she hoped would be a comfort and joy to her in spite of her misfortunes. In this expectation, however, she was destined to suffer a bitter disappointment, for the malicious octopus had already cast an evil spell over her progeny, so that, instead of the longed-for child, she gave birth to a large bird’s egg. From this she turned in disgust, and entered her hut full of sorrow and affliction. Many days she grieved her loss, but at length, moved by a morbid curiosity, she went to visit the spot where she had left the egg, when to her surprise she found she had arrived just in time to see a young hawk hatched from it. In her solitude and ardent longing for something to love and care for, she took it home and somewhat relieved her maternal instincts by feeding and nursing it. As the hawk grew bigger she gradually acquired

the habit of talking to him, almost as if he were a human child, until in the course of time he began to understand her words. He was not able to speak to her in reply, but made signs so intelligently that there was soon opened a mode of communication between them which enabled them to converse quite freely together.

One day, as the hawk was perched on the top of a high tree he happened to notice a fine fish swimming about in the sea. Taking a swift dive he soon secured it with his talons, and carried it off to his foster-mother, whom by this time he dearly loved. She accepted it with every sign of pleasure, and being very hungry, would have commenced to cook it at once, but unfortunately she had no fire. She had never been taught the art of kindling fire by the friction of two sticks. After pondering over the difficulty for several minutes, she said to the hawk, "My child, now that you can use your wings so well, will you fly away to my mother's home at Lifu, and ask her to send me a few useful articles? I should like a skirt for myself, a live fire-stick, a piece of rope, and a calabash full of fresh water." Most willing to oblige, away the hawk flew, and having found the place, he alighted in the lap of the old woman—his grandmother, whom he found seated at the threshold of her little hut. The old woman was at first startled by his unceremonious intrusion, but on closer observation she began to recognise certain almost human features about the bird's manner. She therefore ventured to speak to him in her own language, which was, of course, the same he had been accustomed to hear all his life. Flying into the interior of the hut, the bird perched on a piece of wood

projecting from the fireplace, seeing which, the old woman asked, "Is it a live fire-stick that you want?" To this he gave a shrug of assent. He then flew off to a little heap of stones, and gave the old woman to understand that he also wanted a few of them, and in similar ways he managed to make known to her all his wants. When at length it became evident that all his wants had been supplied, the kind old grandmother packed the skirt and stones in a basket which she quickly made from coconut palm leaves, secured by the rope he had begged, not forgetting to leave two loops with which to suspend it from the two wings of the bird, and in such a manner that the burden would rest on his back, in fact just as she herself would have carried it. She then filled a gourd with fresh water, which she advised him to carry with his beak, and finally she tied the live fire-stick under one of his wings, when he immediately flew away on his homeward journey.

During the bird's absence, his mother, more solitary than ever before, sat gazing anxiously towards the horizon, wondering whether her son was likely to succeed in executing the difficult task she had entrusted to him, and whether she had not done wrong in exposing him to such danger and risk. Her misgivings were, however, soon removed, for presently she was delighted to observe a thin streak of smoke away over the sky-line, which drew nearer and nearer, until she began clearly to recognise the beloved form of her son the hawk, whom she received with demonstrations of the utmost joy. She kindled a fire at once, in which she heated the stones sent by her mother; then placing the fish on the stones and covering it with leaves, it became

thoroughly cooked, when she and her son sat and ate it, feeling very happy and satisfied.

Now the octopus had not been idle in the meantime in brewing schemes of mischief against the unhappy couple. After leaving the woman on the island, he turned his attention to her lonely husband. Thinking to beguile him into an unhappy marriage, he took the form of a woman, and in this disguise he sought by every cunning device he possessed to captivate his attentions. Night and day he (or as we should now say "she") lingered about the man's hut, trying to act the rôle of a fair enchantress. She suffered, however, one great disadvantage in not being endowed with conversational gifts at all adequate to her part. If spoken to by the man, instead of an intelligible response, she could only repeat the words he had used in addressing her. The witch continued her efforts to captivate him many weeks, but so far completely failed to bewitch her would-be victim. Nay, more, as time went on, and as he daily recalled to mind the beloved form of his lost wife, he began to loathe and detest his evil temptress, ardently longing to rid himself of her presence. He tried to drive her from the premises, threatened her very life even, but all in vain. Deliverance was, however, near at hand.

One day the lonely exiled wife said to her son, the hawk, "I want you to go a second time to Lifu, and I hope you will be as successful as before; this time I wish you to visit the home of my husband, and to tell him from me that he must kill the woman who is so greatly harassing him, because she has an evil spirit (haze)."

The bird flew off, and soon arrived at his destination.

Seeing the husband squatting near his canoe, he flew on to his knee, and thence to a coil of rope lying near. "Do you wish me to take up that coil of rope?" asked the forlorn man, to which the bird gave a sign of assent. He then flew on to the head of the woman, who was as usual loitering about the hut. In some mysterious manner the man seemed to comprehend the sign, and readily began to tie the woman's hands together. Then looking to the bird for further instructions, he watched it take up its position on the prow of his canoe, at which sign he lifted the woman aboard; then himself embarking, he paddled for the open sea. The man and his female prisoner followed closely with their eyes every movement of the bird, the former implicitly carrying out its orders, and no doubt secretly delighted to have the opportunity of doing so. Seeing it perch on a large stone, which lay in the bottom of the canoe, he obediently attached this to the woman; and at another signal flung her into the depths of the sea. The man and bird then paddled for shore. Here it soon became evident that the bird had not yet completed his task, for again he perched on the prow of the canoe, and as it was clear that a second voyage was intended, and of greater duration (since the bird had indicated that provisions would be required), the man invited a few of his friends to accompany him. Having provisioned the canoe, they again made for the open sea, the bird flying ahead and acting as their pilot. After several hours they came in sight of the lonely little island where the long-lost wife was waiting to welcome them. Great was the rejoicing at their happy reunion, and many were the expressions of gratitude bestowed on the faithful hawk who

accompanied the party to the dear homeland of Lifu.

17. *The Unnatural Parent.*

A small hut standing in the midst of a grove of coconut palms in a lonely part of the interior of Lifu was the home of a happy and well-contented couple, whose tenderest affections were centred on their only child, a little daughter. As the child grew in stature she developed a beauty of form and figure rarely known and never excelled by the belles of the island. Her hair was long, fair, and straight (not wavy or curly like that of the ordinary run of girls); her complexion was ruddy, her teeth of pearly whiteness, and her eyes bright with fun and laughter. Her charms were still further enhanced by graceful tattoo marks on each side of her face, extending from the corners of her mouth almost to her shapely ears.

Now it came to pass that as her father gazed upon her youthful beauty and marked her ever-increasing loveliness from day to day, he became more and more lustfully enamoured of her; until, almost driven to desperation, he vowed he would not rest until he could claim her as a wife. With this object in view, he made known his intentions to the girl's mother, his wife, hoping to enlist her aid in his iniquitous project of decoying the girl and rendering her complacent. So rabid was the man's passion that he threatened to take his wife's life if she failed to secure the submissive obedience of their daughter.

No sooner did the mother reveal the matter to her daughter than the girl became filled with disgust, absolutely refusing to entertain the idea for a moment; and in her shame and sorrow she at once determined

to flee from home and to remain far beyond his reach. She had few preparations to make, and having said good-bye to her mother, she started that same day, seeking through the tangled bushes a place of safety where she might hide from her unnatural father. After journeying many miles, she discovered a large cave where she determined to spend the night, and possibly to make a temporary home for herself.

As soon as the father learned of his daughter's flight he became very angry, and set out after her in hot pursuit. In some places he was able to track her by her footsteps, in others by the disturbed undergrowth, and in this manner he arrived at the cave towards evening.

Directly the girl discerned her father's form, as he stood at the entrance of the cave in the light of the setting sun, her heart beat fast with terror, and she sought to find a hiding-place behind a large stalactite which stood alone in the middle of the cave. The father, now fully assured that he would secure his coveted victim, slowly entered the cave, glancing quickly around on every side in search of her. Seeing no one inside, he concluded that she had surely been metamorphosed into the stalactite standing before him. This thought filled him with such madness and wrath, that he raised his heavy fighting club, striking the brittle stone with such a powerful blow as to shatter it to atoms. He noticed that one large fragment of the shattered rock flew towards the darker recesses of the cave. This he chased, but it cleverly evaded his grasp, then suddenly disappeared in the gloom, leaving no visible trace behind. After waiting and searching about for some time longer and having failed to detect the narrow fissure by

which the girl had actually made her escape, he returned home, muttering imprecations of terrible import as he went.

The girl, finding herself once more in the bush, wandered on and on, plucking wild fruits and other edibles to satisfy her hunger. There were no signs of human habitation to be seen, and as the darkness was now fast falling over the forest she sat down near a fallen tree, weary and dejected in spirit. As she sat thus, wondering what was to become of her, she was startled by a strange and uncouth voice sounding from the foliage above. Looking up, she saw a large lizard, an animal she had always been taught to regard with loathing, and which now so greatly scared her that she stood on her feet to flee away with all speed. Before, however, she could move, the lizard arrested her flight by addressing her in gentle and kindly tones, assuring her she had nothing to fear from him. The poor girl, only too glad to hear a kind word, again seated herself on the ground. Her strange friend then began to question her as to how she came there, so far from the haunts of men. She willingly poured forth her pitiful story, on hearing which the lizard was so deeply touched with sympathy that he invited her to make her home in his plantation, stipulating only that she should not consume any sugar-cane or bananas that were partly eaten, for such, he informed her, were his own special portions.

The recently forlorn girl soon became quite reconciled to her new home and surroundings, and indeed was beginning to feel more or less happy in her romantic life, when one day she observed in the distance the dreaded form of her father coming

towards her. Trembling with fear and dismay, she hastily informed her friend the lizard, who as quickly determined to save her at all costs. First he told her to cover her head with a dead banana leaf, and then giving her a large gourd, he begged her to hold it in her arms. Directly the girl did this all her physical beauty magically disappeared; also, by the same magic, the gourd opened to her touch, revealing to her astonished eyes a fine baby boy. By this time the father had arrived on the scene. Glancing casually at the homely-looking woman, and entirely failing to recognise his daughter, he inquired if there was a young girl staying anywhere in the neighbourhood. He was told there was no girl in those parts (she herself, of course, was no longer a girl, being the mother of a child). Her father then passed on his way, and when he had quite disappeared, the lizard again exercised his magic by restoring her beauty, and by returning the child to its bed in the dried gourd.

Now although by this time the girl and the lizard had become fast friends, and were in the habit of spending many hours each day in one another's society, the girl very naturally began to long for a sight of her dear mother and of the home of her happy childhood. She thought and thought about the project until she could no longer restrain her desire. She informed the lizard of her intention, who tried hard to dissuade her, saying many flattering things to induce her to prolong her visit. Seeing, however, that her heart was set on going, and that her resolve could not be shaken by any of his arguments, he reluctantly assented, at the same time still further proving his good will by helping her to disguise

herself as on a former occasion. He also offered to escort her as far as her home, to protect her from all danger. Everything being thus satisfactorily planned, away they went together; the transformed beauty with her child in its shoulder sling ("ingone-peng"), and the lizard, who walked ahead and acted as guide. On their arrival at the girl's home they found the mother alone, attending to household duties. She, seeing a party of strangers on her threshold, hastened to give them the usual cordial welcome, and to offer them hospitality. She did not recognise her daughter, and probably would never have done so, had not the girl, no longer able to restrain her feelings of filial love, rushed to her mother and, falling before her to the ground, made herself known. Who can describe the joy of the mother's heart as she bent over her dearly beloved, but long-lost daughter.

Soon after their salutations were ended, the father of the girl, who had been mending his canoe, returned home, and seeing the strangers he also extended a hearty welcome to them. Although he looked closely at the woman and her child, he never for a moment suspected her real identity, and soon left the visitors to the care of his wife, while he went off in search of fish for their evening meal. During his absence on this errand, the lizard ventured to suggest to the mother and daughter a method of putting an end to their domestic troubles, namely, that the juice of a certain poisonous fruit should be mixed with the man's food, and placed before him in a separate "itra." This was agreed upon, and when the father returned home weary and hungry the poisonous food was given him. He was specially

gratified on finding that his wife had made an "itra" for himself alone, and ate of it very freely, the result being that he soon became very ill and died. After a time, the lizard, fearing he might be outstaying his welcome, and not wishing to trespass further on his friends' hospitality, determined to return to his own place, but noticing that the girl was reluctant to leave her mother, he consented to her remaining in her old home: also, as his parting gift, he allowed her to keep the child he had lent to her. He then retraced his steps, reaching his home in safety, where he continued to live in solitude for the rest of his days.

18. *Why the Lifuans Bury their Dead in the Ground.*

Many, many years ago, there dwelt in the village of Trabut on the island of Lifu a married couple. As is commonly the case, history does not record the name of the woman, but we are told that the man's name was "Kommo-Kommo" (Rough Play).

Now Kommo-Kommo was obliged to pay a visit to his head chief twice every year to convey to him his tribute of yams and other native food. It so happened that during one of these visits to court he was taken very ill and died. According to the usual custom of the land, he was, the same day, wrapped up in mats and laid in his place of interment, namely, a hole or small cave in the rocks.

The sad news of the man's death was speedily conveyed to his wife, who, poor soul, had been always treated by him with harshness, not to say downright cruelty, since the time of their marriage. Nevertheless she knew what was expected of her

by the time-honoured custom of the land, and was soon on her way to the spot in which his remains had been laid, there to pour out her loud lamentations and grief. On arriving at the place, she commenced to wail and beat her breast, the burden of her cry being "Oh my husband! Alas! alas! for me. Oh that we might once again walk side by side as once we did!" When at length her mourning was ended, and she had proved the genuineness of her sorrow by remaining several days near the corpse, she set out for her home, weeping and lamenting aloud as she went. Suddenly, and before she had gone very far, she became conscious of the presence of some unearthly being following closely behind her, and on turning quickly round she saw to her dismay a bundle of mats hurrying after her, and on the top of the mats was something like a human head making most grotesque and horrible grimaces. The woman, of course, took to her heels and grew even more terrified on hearing a voice from the midst of the mats calling aloud, "Wait for me, I am coming as fast as I can. You wanted to walk by my side, and now that I am here you hurry away." Finding that she could not possibly outrun the mats, she made for the nearest tree, up which she climbed in the hope of hiding herself amongst its foliage. But the spirit of Kommo-Kommo, for it was indeed his, discovered her, and again he invited her to come down and walk with him. By this time her grief had given place to intense terror and dread: she no longer desired the company of her husband, her chief concern now was how best to get rid of him, and reach home with the least possible delay. Not daring again to take to the road, she climbed from one tree to another

until finally, breathless and exhausted, she reached her own hut. Here she was met by her father-in-law, to whom she related her strange adventures. She was, however, greatly comforted and reassured by his words of sympathy, especially when he said that if his son's spirit should dare to enter the house he would strike it down to the earth with his heavy fighting club. Events afterwards proved that he had promised more than he could perform. Spirits have little fear of fighting clubs, and closed doors do not prevent their entrance. The spirit of Kommo-Kommo was no exception, for shortly afterwards he entered his home, in spite of every threat and barrier. No sooner had he gained a footing in the hut than he set to work tickling the bodies of his wife and father to such a degree that they were almost mad with hysterical laughter. In spite of all their earnest pleadings, he stubbornly refused to desist, until, not being able to endure it any longer, their spirits departed, and floated away to the spirit land. Kommo-Kommo, seemingly well satisfied with his work, lay down and slept by the side of the dead bodies of his two victims. Here he was found next morning by an old woman of the village, who raised a cry of alarm. The neighbours flocked into the house, but neither the old woman nor Kommo-Kommo were anywhere to be seen. As the people looked upon the faces of the dead, however, they were not slow in surmising the cause of their death: for the tickling propensities of spirits of the dead is a fact well established in the islands. After considering the matter for a time, the people present concluded that if the dead were to be allowed the liberty of coming forth from their places of sepulture and torment their

living friends, life would become a real burden to them all. Therefore it was decided that, from that time forward, all dead bodies would be expected to remain in the place in which they had been laid by their friends. Also it was resolved that they should be buried deep in the warm earth, that the sods should be well pressed down above them, and that there they should remain until they returned to dust.

19. *The Wonderful Adventures of Three Orphans.*

On a rocky headland of the island of Lifu, and within easy reach of the rough, shingly beach, there once stood a small thatched hut, the sole occupants of which were three orphan children. The eldest of these, a clever-looking little girl some five or six years of age, had evidently something serious weighing on her mind, for she looked anxious and careworn. Her brother, who was barely three years old, was watching over and amusing his little baby brother, who lay kicking up his heels on the floor of the hut.

At the time our story opens the children had but recently been bereaved of the last of their parents, namely, the mother; and the problem which was troubling the little girl was how to supply the helpless baby with fitting nourishment. As regarded herself and younger brother, there was no cause for present anxiety on the score of food, since their parents had left several large plantations for their use. But although they had such a plentiful supply of yams, taro, sweet potatoes, etc., she was aware of the unsuitableness of such fare for a child of only a few months old. Moreover, she had no fire left with which to cook this garden produce. Since her mother's death

she had nourished the child with the juice of sugar-cane and the milk of very young coconuts. She did not, however, feel satisfied that the dear baby would thrive on a purely vegetarian diet, therefore she decided to risk leaving her brother in charge of him, whilst she went on a shell-fishing expedition. Starting off at break of day, she bent her steps in the direction of a sandy beach noted for its crabs and variety of shell-fish. Her mind was so much preoccupied, however, by family anxieties that before she had got far on her journey she found that she had left the beaten track ; and shortly found herself in a wild and desolate region by the seaside. She here commenced her search, and was soon so busily engrossed in her occupation as not to be aware of the presence of a number of demons until she had been there some time. Looking up suddenly from a limpid pool, into whose many tinted depths she had been searching for her prey, she was surprised to see a huge rock rising up out of the smaller fragments of rock, while dancing around it was a troop of demons, locally known by the name of "Telopi," and greatly dreaded by the islanders. No one had ever warned the girl that the place was haunted ; but she had heard often of the telopis and their cruel deeds, and quickly recognised them now by their large feet and swollen round heads. As the poor girl turned to flee, they all set out in pursuit, and quickly overtaking her they bound her hands and feet, and carried her off to the lower regions, where they were wont to hold their cannibal feasts. As soon as they arrived at their destination, they placed her under the charge of an old woman, whose duty it was to prepare the native ovens and cook the bodies of all captives

snatched from the upper world. Now it so happened that at the moment of their arrival the old woman was unusually busy, having more work than she could possibly attend to: she therefore appealed to the chief of the "telopis," requesting that the girl's life should be spared for a time, in order that she might be employed as assistant cook. To this the chief assented.

As the shadows of evening lengthened, and the sun began to tinge the placid ocean with a red glow of colour, the little boy left at home to guard the baby began to feel anxious on account of his sister's long delay. Eagerly he watched for her appearance, and as it grew darker, listened for her footsteps, but no sister returned to cheer their home. At length, wearied with long watching, he resolved to go himself in search of her, and having made his baby brother as comfortable as possible he started off. Needless to say, he searched in vain, and fearing to lose his way in the darkness, he returned home sad and forlorn and lay down to sleep by the side of his baby brother. As he slept he saw, as in a vision, the form of his dead mother coming towards him; then he distinctly heard her well-remembered voice, instructing him that as soon as day dawned he must visit a certain pool of water in the neighbourhood, and that he must embrace whatever he saw standing up in the middle of the water. Attaching the utmost importance to this message from his dead mother, the lad started off early in search of the place described. On his arrival at the pool he found a tall sapling standing upright in the centre of it, gently swaying to and fro, as if to call his attention. Plunging into the water, he threw his arms around it, as his

mother had commanded, when he immediately found himself growing taller and stronger, until in a short time he attained the full strength and stature of a man. On the night following the mother of the two boys appeared to the younger one, and giving him the same instructions, he too became a strong and full-grown man.

Now that the two brothers had so miraculously reached the estate of manhood, they once more returned to the hut to learn whether or not their sister had come back. Finding that she was still absent, the elder proposed that they should start forthwith in quest of her. To this the younger brother agreed after some explanation, for when his sister left home he was too young even to know of her existence. First they set to work to build a substantial canoe, in which they could the more easily search the numerous little inlets and coves of the coast. In this they embarked, taking with them nothing except one ripe coconut. Having carefully examined the coast without success, they paddled out to sea and subsequently reached a strange island, which proved to be the home of the "telopis," though they were not aware of the fact. Here they landed, and being very weary lay down and went to sleep.

Now just about this time the old woman, who acted as head cook to the "telopis," began to experience an itching sensation in the soles of her feet; and knowing that this indicated the presence of newly-arrived human beings, she sent the girl who had been appointed assistant cook to go outside and discover who the intruders were. The two brothers, however, were so well hidden by the tall grass in which they lay that she failed to observe them, and

reported the fact to her mistress. As, however, the old woman's foot continued to itch, the girl was sent down to the beach a second time, and now, after a more careful search, she discovered the two young men. She did not, of course, recognise them as her brothers, and quickly she ran and informed the old dame of the arrival of two strange young men. At first the old woman became very angry at the presumption of the two strangers, and went out with the intention of evicting them. She threatened them with all kinds of evil, in terms the most violent. She declared that it was utterly impossible for them to remain a moment longer on the island, and that the chief would most certainly kill them and eat them the moment he heard of their presence. To all her expostulations and threats the young men gave no heed, but calmly informed her that they did not intend to leave until they had thoroughly explored the island. The old woman, finding it useless to remonstrate further, and probably secretly admiring their courage, told them that she personally did not wish to injure them, and asked them to allow her to hide them under a large mat, to which proposal they reluctantly consented. She then stationed the girl, her assistant, to keep guard, while she herself returned home.

Soon afterwards the chief and his retinue arrived from a hunting expedition. No sooner had the former seated himself than his foot began to itch, at which he demanded of the old woman what strangers were present. She stoutly denied having seen or heard of any strange visitors. The chief, however, suspected her of lying, and so greatly did he intimidate her by threats, that she confessed to having hidden

two young men. She was then commanded to bring them in, which she did. The chief was delighted to have two such stalwart men in his power, and, as he eyed them over, did not fail to observe their plumpness of figure and suitable condition for the *cuisine*. He decided that one of them should be cooked that very day, and that the other should be reserved for some future occasion. In the meantime, he gave orders that they should be kept under a strict guard. Accordingly the two brothers were located in the centre of the large hut, close to the stout and lofty pillar which supported it. A number of demons was stationed around them as warders, whilst many others were set as sentinels about the doors. As a further precaution, the two prisoners were commanded to sing aloud, and never to cease, that the guards might be assured of their presence through the darkness, by the sound of their voices. The young men sat down, their sister being seated near them, and soon began to sing so sweetly that many of the demons fell fast asleep. Just before commencing to sing, the two brothers had secretly planted the ripe coconut which they had brought from home, and as they sang it sprouted and grew. Higher and higher it grew, until in a little while it pushed its way through the roof of the house, and as it still continued to grow it bent itself far over the sea in the direction of Lifu. Regarding this as a miraculous arrangement for their escape, the three prisoners, still singing, began to climb its trunk, and reaching the bended part ran for their lives. Now, of course, the singing ceased, and the "telopis" soon discovered their flight and speedily gave chase. On and on the prisoners ran, with a whole troop of

“telopis” in hot pursuit, until the former could clearly see the sandy beach of their native island. Reaching this, the three of them sprang together from the tree, when lo! the trunk sprang to an upright position, at the same time hurling the telopis into the deep sea, where, not being able to swim, they all perished together.

Ever since that time the island, so long in the possession of the telopis, has become accessible to human beings; and to-day it is considered quite safe, even for children, to go there on fishing excursions.

20. *The Domesticated Demon.*

In the olden times, and in a remote part of the Lifuan bush, there dwelt two unmarried sisters. Now the chief burden of these young women was their isolation from their fellow islanders and the utter solitude of their lives. They found the days long and dreary with no kith or kin to tend and work for. With regard to material things, they got along very well without neighbours, as their wants were few and easily supplied, especially in the matter of food. They regarded work in their plantation rather as a recreation than a serious task, and yet were but rarely without an abundance of garden produce. A change of diet was obtained in many ways, especially by searching in the bush for the large white grubs (wanak) which inhabit dead wood, and are often found in fallen trees, and still counted by the Lifuans among their greatest dainties. One day the two sisters discovered a tree almost packed with these delicious grubs, and were richly enjoying the banquet when

one of the two had the misfortune to be bitten on the tongue by one of the grubs she had conveyed to her mouth. A copious flow of blood was the result of the bite ; and as it is customary on Lifu to regard human blood as a sacred thing, she hastily plucked a large leaf, into the hollow of which she caused it to drop, then covering it reverently with another leaf she laid it carefully on one side. Some time afterwards, happening to be near the same spot, she was surprised by hearing a sound of crying proceeding from the leaves ; and stooping down to examine them, she found that her blood had been metamorphosed into a man child. He was a strong, healthy-looking little boy, and though much like other children in outward appearance, he differed from them in being able to speak from the time of his birth. Seeing the woman bending over him, he informed her that he was originally a demon, but having observed her lonely condition he had pitied her, and taken advantage of her accident to come and live with her, and in fact to be to her as a son. The two sisters were delighted to have charge of the baby, and devoted themselves entirely to secure his comfort and happiness. Sometimes he caused them a little distress, and sorrow, by requesting what it was not in their power to grant. On one occasion, for example, he asked them to allow him to have a sea-bath, although he must have known that the sea was far, far away. To this the two nurses replied that such a thing was quite impossible, adding they too would like to be near the sea so as to soak their “ whent ” (leaves of the pandanus) in salt water and make new mats for the house. Hearing this, the child assured them that it was not at all impossible. “ Take me on your

back," said he, "and one of you carry the 'whent,' and I will guide you to a wonderful place that I know quite well." To this command they yielded, as usual, and after a long journey through the bush they arrived at a strange, wild-looking place. "Let me down here," he said, "and let us stand still and see what happens." Again they obeyed him, when, behold, the sea began to flow about their feet, getting deeper and deeper each moment like a rising tide, until in a short time they were able to swim about in it. "Let me know," said the bewitched child, "as soon as your 'whent' is sufficiently well soaked, that I may make arrangements for our return." As soon as they were quite ready to start, they accordingly informed him. He made no reply, but evidently cast some kind of spell over the water, for it immediately began to subside, indeed before they left the place all the ground in the vicinity was as dry as it had been on their arrival.

As time went on the boy proved a real comfort and help to the two sisters. By an exercise of the miraculous powers with which he was born he was able to gratify all their wants.

One day, after he had reached adult age, he solemnly informed his "two mothers," as he was in the habit of calling them, that he had made up his mind to take a long journey, and to go alone. Most reluctantly they consented to part with him, and with many tears they bade him a sorrowful farewell.

He visited many places in the course of the next few months, and met with many strange people. As a very eligible young man, he was a great favourite with the fair sex, and in the course of time made a judicious choice of a fair maiden for his wife. Sub-

sequently he induced her to return with him to his old home, where she was well received by the two sisters, and where they all lived very happily together. Years went by with nothing to disturb the harmony of their lives. After a fifth child had been born to the young couple, a sore famine swept over the land, which the demon's most potent spells of sorcery were unable to assuage. The little man, realising his impotency, soon became very despondent and indifferent to worldly affairs. Hitherto his miraculous powers had been unlimited. Now that they were failing him in such a serious emergency, he completely lost heart, and did not do even what he could to provide food for the household. His wife could get neither yams nor taro, and was obliged to make her "itras" from different kinds of herbs and leaves which she found growing wild in the forest.

One day, as the demon sat dejectedly on the floor of his hut, he asked his wife to give him some of the cooked leaves she was preparing, telling her that he was almost dead with hunger. To this request she readily assented; bidding him, however, to wait a little longer until they were sufficiently cooked. A second time he begged for food, but was again asked to wait until the "itra" was quite ready. Then, before his wife had time to say another word, a remarkably strange thing happened. The poor demon began gradually to sink into the ground. At first his wife had not observed what was happening, but as he demanded food a third time, still sinking lower and lower, she looked towards him and discovered with alarm his gradual disappearance; indeed, by the time she had collected her wits together, nothing but his head was visible above ground. She now rushed

frantically towards him, grabbing at his hair to pull him back, but alas! she was too late, and he sank quite out of sight. His spirit, however, did not leave the island. It is said to have become incarnate again in the person of a native of the village of Jokin by the sea. Afterwards his descendants, who became very numerous, went to reside at the inland village of Kethan. The present inhabitants of that village still boast of their illustrious ancestry.

21. *The Stolen "Sio."* *

In the days of long ago, a certain youth of good lineage from the Gaica district of Lifu whose name was Hnamano determined to pay a visit of state and ceremony to one of the head chiefs of the northern district of the island of Uvea. Taking advantage of a calm sea and gentle south-east trade wind, he embarked in his little canoe, and after an uneventful voyage of some twenty hours he arrived safely at his destination. He landed on the sandy beach, off the village of Weneke, where he was kindly welcomed by the natives, who knew, or had heard, of the line of illustrious warriors from which he was descended. Making his way to the chief's residence, he was again heartily welcomed by the chief himself, who graciously accepted the valuable presents of beads, shells, and "dila" (the spun hair of the flying fox) he had brought from Lifu, and was invited to remain as an honoured guest at the royal court.

In the course of the young man's visit, the chief happened one day to mention a certain wonderful

* A large disc of green stone mounted on a two-foot staff and used as an emblem or standard of state, or victory in war (p. 171)

cave in the adjacent forest, which was the abode of an innumerable host of demons. Being fond of adventure, the youth eagerly expressed a wish to visit the haunted cave, at the same time begging his host the chief to accompany him. The latter, however, not feeling inclined to run any unnecessary risk, at first refused to comply ; but after some days, finding how utterly impossible it was to divert the youth from his purpose, he partly assented, promising to introduce him on the morrow to an old woman, an expert in witchcraft, whom they might consult, and who could give them sage counsel, and secure their safety, in case they ultimately decided to carry out their project. The old witch refused positively to have anything whatever to do with the enterprise, at least for a time ; but at length, no longer able to resist the young man's persuasions and entreaties, she reluctantly consented to help them as far as lay in her power.

Accordingly, having fixed the day and made all necessary preparations, the old witch set out with the chief and his young guest in the direction of the forest cave. After a journey of some hours she called a halt, and informed her fellow travellers that it was impossible for her to accompany them any longer, and that she must return home, so as to be able to work certain spells for the success of the enterprise. Before leaving them, she gave the chief certain instructions as to their future mode of action, also as to the route to be taken. The two men then went on alone, and in a short time emerged on a small open space of ground, in the centre of which lay a large, smooth, flat stone to which they directed their steps. Standing together on the stone, the chief commanded the young man to close his eyes, and on no account to open them

again until further notice. This he did, and when commanded again to open his eyes, he found himself standing by the chief's side in an immense underground cave. At present, beyond the fact that the cave was of vast dimensions, there was nothing very wonderful to be seen. The chief then took from his bag a number of tree leaves, previously given to him by the witch, and, following her instructions, the two men began to chew them. Then indeed their eyes were opened. They plainly beheld hosts and hosts of demons, with which the cave was thickly populated. In outward appearance the demons were very much like themselves; their action, movements, and grimaces, however, were extremely grotesque. As the two men stood gazing at this strange, unearthly-looking crowd, they heard the voice of the king of the demons calling aloud in a shrill, piping voice, "I smell the smell of human bodies." He was at once reassured by his retinue, who told him that none but his loyal subjects were, or could be, present. After this, the two visitors witnessed a most interesting ceremony, in which all took part. At a word of command from the king, the demons formed themselves in single file, the length of their line extending to a distance of some fifty or sixty miles, after which they began to pass, from hand to hand, a very valuable green stone disc, called a "sio." At the sight of this magnificent specimen of a sio, the young Lifuan's cupidity was at once aroused, and he determined, quite forgetful of the danger of his position, to gain possession of it at all risks. As he observed the precious treasure coming nearer and nearer, and was able to discern its points of beauty and perfection, he could forbear no longer. Suddenly snatching it from the hands of the

little devil through which it was passing, he rushed headlong in the direction whence he had come, closely followed by his friend the chief. So rapid and adroit was the theft, that some little time elapsed before the demons sufficiently recovered their wits to give chase. By this time the two fugitives had reached the portico of the cave, where they hastily chewed some of the leaves given them by the witch, and before the now furious demons could lay hands upon them, they were safely landed on the flat stone above ground. Proud of the success of their adventure, and especially of the priceless "sio," they started for home. Before they had proceeded far they met the old witch, who needed no informing of what had happened. She seemed to regard the matter more seriously than the two men, and, anxious for the safety of her chief's distinguished guest, suggested that he should make no delay in quitting the island. To this Hnamano agreed, not from personal motives of fear, but rather in consideration of his host's safety, and perhaps even more lest he should have to return his precious "sio" to its rightful owners. The old woman then inquired of him as to the manner of his return; to which he replied that he only knew of one way, namely, in the canoe by which he had come. She enlightened his ignorance, however, by informing him that it was in her power to enable him to return by a subterranean passage, assuring him that this would be the safer and shorter route, although there were some few obstacles and perils to be encountered on the way. The undaunted youth, as usual making light of perils and obstacles, decided that he would prefer to return to Lifu by the passage under the sea; also that he would prefer to go unaccompanied as he had come. His

good friend the witch therefore began to furnish him with minute instructions for the journey : especially did she impress upon his mind that he was to continue a straight course under all conditions ; to notice nothing he might see, either on the right hand or the left ; and on no account to speak or make any kind of noise.

Shouldering the beautiful “sio,” the young man set out immediately on his homeward journey. All went well for some time, until he came face to face with two large snakes, one on either side of his path. At sight of these reptiles, so greatly abhorred and detested by his race, his courage and *sang-froid* suddenly forsook him. Uttering a terrified scream, he turned back and fled like the wind, upon which a whole legion of devils started after him in hot pursuit. The old woman, however, came to his aid, driving back the devils by a word, and, after severely remonstrating with the youth for his stupid fear, sent him off again. Acknowledging his friend’s superior wisdom, and reassured by her words, he this time resolutely and bravely passed the snakes, and was just beginning to forget the adventure, when his attention was suddenly arrested by a company of graceful-looking witches, who were amusing themselves by dancing and other playful antics. As he passed them they turned and smiled on him, when, forgetting or wilfully ignoring his friend’s injunctions, he readily enough returned the smile ; thus once more breaking the spell which protected him, and compelling him again to flee for his life. A third time he set out afresh, and being now more experienced he was able to pass the snakes and the dancing women without any mishap. Just as he began to

congratulate himself on his success and progress, he came upon two very lovely girls, and was so suddenly enamoured by their charms that, even without the least sign of encouragement from the fair maidens, he turned and smiled; and again the demons chased him back. By this time the hitherto patient old witch was getting very angry, and threatened to leave the foolishly susceptible young man to his fate, unless he swore to obey her in all particulars and under all circumstances. So, making a great and determined resolve, he started again, this time steeling his heart to all the allurements of the way. He succeeded in passing the snakes, the dancing witches, and the two charming maidens as though he saw them not, eventually arriving on the sandy beach of his own village at Gaica, where he exhibited the precious sio to the astonished gaze of his countrymen, telling them the story of his wonderful adventures.*

22. *Cainyo the Giant.*

Hnalekula and his brother were two little Lifuan boys of more than average shrewdness and understanding, although they lived with their parents in the midst of a dense and secluded forest. The family plantations being at a considerable distance from their thatched cottage, the two small boys were frequently left at home during their parents' absence. There being no ravenous beasts or poisonous reptiles on the island, nor any neighbours, friendly or otherwise, in the vicinity, there seemed to be no reason

* There are other versions of this legend; from one of these it would appear that the "stolen sio" was the first sio ever introduced to Lifu, but that Hnamano did not *steal* it.

to fear for the children's safety. And yet there was a serious danger close at hand, which the parents, knowing the mischievous temperament of their two boys, had good reason to fear. They therefore solemnly warned the children never on any account to wander in a certain direction, or visit a certain part of the forest, on pain of severe chastisement, though as to what there was to fear the children were not told. As is commonly the case with precocious boys, the more they were warned, the more they longed to visit the forbidden spot. Having discussed the matter together, the two boys resolved to make the venture, and one morning set out on their voyage of discovery. They soon arrived at the spot, and looking around could discover nothing of an unusual kind, unless it were a lofty wild fig-tree full of ripe fruit, which they began to pluck and eat, scattering much of it on the ground. Then, wandering a little further, they found a pool of fresh water. Here was a treat indeed ! Plunging into the pool, they bathed and splashed, and bathed and splashed, until they had bathed and splashed the well quite dry. Not finding anything else with which to amuse themselves, they returned home none the worse for their secret and enjoyable adventure.

When the parents returned from their gardens in the evening, the father, eyeing over his boys, noticed that they were unusually clean ; and as there had been no rain to account for such a change, he became suspicious, and without saying a word started off for the pool, which, to his dismay, he found quite dry. What would they do, or where would they go for water now ? He, of course, knew who the culprits were, and returned home full of rage, and

gave them the soundest thrashing they had ever yet experienced. The two boys, not in the least realising the gravity of their offence, so deeply resented the cruel treatment they had received, that they determined to run away from home that same night and never to return.

After wandering about in the bush for some days, they came in sight of a grass house, where one "Cainyo," a notorious demon, lived alone. As the two boys approached his threshold, Cainyo demanded, in tones of thunder, to know who they were, and what was their business with him. Hnalekula, with that ingratiating manner he could so readily assume, at once began to narrate to him the whole of their story, of their disobedience, and of the cruel beating they had received. On hearing this, the giant became so much interested, and so greatly admired their independent spirit and enterprise, that he allowed them to pass on unharmed. In the course of time they reached the house of another of the Cainyos, who also listened to their story and gave them permission to pass on. Eventually they came to the house of the chief of all the Cainyos. A high and mighty giant was he. He had killed and eaten so many human beings that it had been found necessary by the chiefs of the district to tie up his mouth with stout vines and coconut husks. Seeing the two boys innocently approaching his dwelling, he began to question them, as the other demons had done; and so very attentively did he listen to their account that they quite expected to be allowed to continue their wanderings unmolested. As soon as they had concluded their story, however, and much to their dismay, he commanded them to enter his hut.

Believing that their last hour had come, the trembling lads went inside the hut, where, to their relief, they found that their services were required only for the purpose of dressing the giant's hair. Now at first sight this did not seem to be a very arduous task, and the two boys set to work with a hearty good will. Soon, however, they discovered their mistake ; the work was not by any means so easy and simple as they had imagined. The giant had an enormous crop of hair, which was entangled to such a degree that the boys were kept employed about two months before they could reduce it to a state of satisfactory order and trimness. By this time the giant had fallen into a sound sleep, and the two boys, seizing this opportunity, ran off into the bush, where they worked all day long collecting stout vines with which they hoped to bind the limbs of the giant. On their return in the evening they found that Cainyo was still asleep, and at once they commenced to carry out their project. Quickly and silently they wound him round and round, and over and under, until they felt sure that no giant, not even the chief of all the giants, would ever be able to free himself. In this condition the two boys left him and started off once more on their wanderings.

The ponderous body of Cainyo was not to be held fast by coils of fresh vines. As soon as he awoke from his long sleep he began to stretch his huge limbs, when lo ! his fetters snapped asunder like so many reeds and rushes. He looked round for the boys, surprised and angry that they should have dared to play him such a trick and take such liberties with him. His anger became even greater when he found that they had both deserted him ; and away he started for

the bush in search of them, intending to punish them severely. Once, in traversing a number of narrow paths during his search in the bush, he lost the track, but smelling his way back to the path taken by his quarry, he arrived at length at a high tree, on which the two boys were seated. Now the giant was not as eager in his quest for small boys as he had been formerly, seeing that his mouth was muzzled, and he could no longer hope to devour them. Nevertheless, he was most anxious to capture Hnalekula and his brother, in order to chastise them for their presumption in attempting to bind him, the notorious head of the Cainyo tribe, with fresh vines. He looked up steadily and searchingly at the two boys perched on a branch of the tree, but as their faces were not clearly discernible in the thick shade of the foliage, he utterly failed to recognise them. Judging from the giant's manner, the boys soon discovered that he regarded them as strangers; and to carry out the deception, they disguised their voices, inquiring of him as to the object of his search. He readily informed them of his errand, and they with equal readiness promised to assist him, if they could. With this pretended object in view, they invited Cainyo to climb the tree, and to take up his position on the branch on which they were sitting, where he would have a view of the bush for miles around. The cunning boys knew quite well that the branch could not possibly sustain Cainyo's enormous weight; and in fact no sooner did he place his foot on it than down it fell with a tremendous crash to the earth. The treacherous boys, who in the meantime were clinging fast to a neighbouring branch, quickly descended from the tree, and put an end to the wicked life of Cainyo, the giant chief.

23. *The "Sewen" (Green Turtle).*

The sewen, say the Lifuans, did not always inhabit the waters of the deep sea. Away back in the distant ages he dwelt on dry land, like the rat and the lizard, and would probably never have become a marine animal at all if it had not been for a difficulty he met with one day whilst at play.

The sewen, and a large snail of the *Bulimus* family, were passing their time in a game of hide and seek on the Lifuan sea-beach, when the former, being so much more bulky in figure than his companion, found it almost impossible to get out of his sight. Not being pleased at his want of success in the game, and being ashamed to acknowledge his defeat by a snail, the sewen, in a fit of anger, flung himself into the sea the more effectually to hide his huge carcase. Finding the sea-water more congenial to his taste than the dry land, he decided to make it his permanent home, coming ashore only at rare intervals to lay eggs.

24. *Two Female Jonahs (A).*

The eastern coast of the island of Uvea, commonly called the "weather side," has always been a favourite fishing-ground frequented by the natives of both sexes. By long-established usage the women are expected to supply certain kinds of bait for the use of their men-folk, and as this is not easily obtained on the lagoon side, they cross the narrow island to where they are sure of a good supply. It is said that in the olden days an Uvean woman was so busily occupied in this pursuit that she was quite unaware of

the presence of a great whale, whose head was in close contact with her body ; so near indeed was he, that on drawing in a deep breath he swallowed the woman whole. At first she hardly realised what had happened, but on looking about her she began to understand her new and strange situation. Her instinct of self-preservation quickened her wits into speedy action, and she began at once to consider various schemes by means of which she might escape from her dark and noisome prison. Deciding on a plan, she took from her bag one of the little shells she had caught, and commenced to scrape a hole in the side of her prison cell. The unfortunate whale suffered agonies during this operation, which, of course, he was powerless to check ; and ultimately he died before it was completed, and was soon afterwards washed ashore.

A party of native fishermen, happening to pass that way, saw the monster fish, and set to work to cut it up for food with their stone axes. Hardly had they commenced their task before they heard a faint cry, which they at first imagined to be the voice of the whale. On hearing it a second time, they listened more intently, when to their amazement and terror they distinctly heard the words, “ Pray look out for me, I am in here.” Trembling with fear, it was some time before they could muster courage to resume their work ; but having waited some time, and not hearing the voice again, they recommenced their labours, though with less energy and confidence than before. As the work proceeded, and they were approaching the region of the whale’s stomach, they were again startled by hearing the mysterious voice say, “ Go gently now ; this is just the place I

am occupying.” Beginning now to understand that by some strange chance a human being was actually imprisoned in the fish, they worked more cautiously and with ever-increasing interest and excitement; and as soon as the stomach was laid open, the woman rolled out on to the beach with an exclamation of gratitude and relief. For some moments the bystanders regarded her with speechless amazement; at length one of them said, “Wherever did you come from?”—evidently forgetting in his excitement that he had just seen her roll out of the whale’s stomach. As soon as the poor woman could regain her self-possession she narrated her simple story, and soon made the best of her way home, apparently none the worse for her short period of imprisonment.

25. *The Second Female Jonah (B).*

Another story is told at Lifu of a native woman who was in search of the palatable crustacea with which to enrich the family “itra.” In the course of her quest, wading through the crystal water, she arrived at the edge of a steep rock, a kind of break in the reef. In one of the many holes or caves invariably found in the steep sides of a coral reef there rested a huge shark, as is the common custom of sharks during the hours of daylight. Now this shark happened to be uncommonly hungry, and seeing the woman standing over the threshold of his retreat, and within easy reach, he seized her by the legs, and swallowed her whole, including, of course, her bag of shells. Exactly as in the case of the woman mentioned in the previous story, she caused the death of her host by trying to scrape a hole of exit with a

mussel-shell, after which she and her floating prison were washed up together on the shores of a foreign land. During the whole of the voyage the woman had been perseveringly scraping away with her mussel-shell, and when at length she managed to escape she found herself on a strange island, which she immediately set out to explore. The place seemed to be very desolate, with not a sign of human habitation in any direction; though she soon found it to be thickly peopled by witches and demons. One of these—an old hag of forbidding appearance—came to her side as she sat on the sea-shore. Gazing sternly at the poor exile for some minutes, the old witch demanded, in a croaky voice, who she was and where she had come from. Her story was soon told, and evidently made some impression on her inquisitor, for the latter replied, “I make it a rule to kill and eat every human being who lands on this island, but as you have been brought here against your will and in such a curious fashion, I will not only spare your life, but I will take you to live with me and will provide for your wants.” There was no alternative but to comply; and the unfortunate stranger settled on the island and tried to make the best of her situation.

Many years passed by, but the prospect of release seemed to the poor exile as far off as ever, when one day, as she was wandering along the beach, she noticed a canoe coming towards the island. Hopes of liberty and a happy reunion with her family and friends sprang spontaneously to her heart as she beheld the frail craft coming nearer and nearer. She could now make out that it was manned by two stalwart youths, who evidently saw her standing alone on the beach,

for they directed the prow of their canoe towards her and jumped quickly ashore. Now although the two young men were entire strangers to her, she began to speak to them at once in the Lifuan tongue, and to entreat their assistance in getting her away from the desolate island. Not only did they understand her words, but they replied in the same tongue, saying, "Is it possible, O mother, that you do not know who we are? We are your sons, and have come in search of you." Then was the heart of the sorely tried mother made glad. She soon began to recognise in the two youths the features of the two little boys she had left behind her. Filled with joy, they all embarked in the canoe, and were in due time safely landed on the shores of Lifu.

26. *The Advantage of Blood-letting.*

A serious dispute once broke out in the Lifuan bush between two trees, which in a short time developed into a physical conflict. So fiercely did the two belligerents belabour each other with blows that they both became covered with bruises and sores. The battle being ended, one of the trees called his friends, saying, "Be good enough to cut my body wherever I am bruised, so that all the bad discoloured blood may escape." After this had been done he quickly recovered his normal strength.

The friends of the other tree wished to cut his body also, but he refused to allow anyone to touch him. The result of this stupid refusal is that to this very day he carries the visible marks of the contest. Wherever you may chance to cut through his bark to-day, you will find that he is of a dirty reddish

colour ; whereas the tree who sensibly demanded to be cut is now beautifully white throughout.

27. *The Christening of the Yam.*

It is said that the yam was introduced into Uvea from a neighbouring island not a very long time ago. Exactly where it came from history does not record, nor is it known by whom it was introduced. All that is now known is that the natives, who had been informed of its great value as an article of food, planted it as they had been instructed to do, and carefully watched its growth from day to day. By some oversight or lapse of memory, no one then living on the island knew by what name it was called ; and in their anxiety for some enlightenment on this important question much discussion ensued.

Just as the leaves of the yam began to wither—an indication of its approaching maturity—and all the natives of the neighbourhood were discussing the advisability of digging it up, a whale was heard disporting itself in the calm water of the lagoon close by the plantation. Now everyone knows in these islands that the whale is the wisest of all fish ; moreover, that he is endowed with the gift of speech. Therefore by common consent the natives agreed to refer the question of the yam's name to this sagacious fish, and adjourned to the sandy beach, there to listen attentively to what he had to say. Almost as soon as they had assembled in a great body, they heard the whale distinctly give utterance to the words “ Ewa u ? Ewa u ? ” The first word of the question asked by the fish, namely, “ Ewa,” was familiar to their ears, meaning “ Where,” but as the

last word was new to them, they naturally concluded that their new tuber was being inquired after, and that it was known by the name of "u." "Ewa u?" therefore meant "Where is the yam?" And that is now the name by which it is known at Uvea.

The natives still hear the whale calling "Ewa u?" and it is now regarded by them as a reminder that their yams are matured and ready for gathering.

28. *The Strange Birth of a Boy.*

An elderly couple once dwelt in the solitude of a small, barren-looking island, lying off the mainland of Uvea. Although little could be seen there but rocks and stones, the two inhabitants found quite sufficient soil in the chinks and interstices to grow an ample supply of food. They would have been altogether contented and happy—at least so they often told each other—if only they had been blessed with children to cheer and brighten their lives. Their hours of labour were short, there were no excitements, their food was good and nutritious, and they found their daily recreation in the discharge of all the simple duties which pertained to their primitive life, such as house-thatching, fishing, canoe-making, planting, etc., yet the constant cry of their hearts was for children.

Now it was the daily custom of the good housewife to make an "itra" (vegetable pudding) for their evening meal, usually composed of snowy white yam, saturated with a rich sauce of coconut milk. Having folded this preparation in young banana leaves, and bound it round and round with fresh vines, she would cook it on hot stones, in the meantime picking

up the growing ends of the yams she had used and stowing them carefully away for the next season's planting. As the "itra" was usually larger than she and her husband could consume at one meal, she was in the habit of folding up, in its dish of leaves, what was left over, and placing it on the fence outside the hut, where it would be freer from the depredations of ants and other insects than on the floor of the hut. Now it happened one morning, when she stepped outside to bring in the remains of the itra for breakfast, that it had completely disappeared. Astonished beyond words, she returned to inquire if her husband knew what had become of it. But no; he had not been outside, and knew nothing whatever, except that she herself was the culprit, a charge which she stoutly denied. On the very next day the same thing happened again, making the husband so angry that he charged his wife with greediness—a charge which every self-respecting native finds it hard to tolerate. Her real grief at this accusation, together with her earnest protestations of innocence, soon convinced her husband that he was wrong. Unlikely and absurd as it might appear, he had no alternative than to suppose that someone from the outside was the thief, and he determined to watch. To this end, instead of having their "itra" in the evening as they ordinarily did, the good wife cooked it in the early morning before daybreak, and after breakfast left the remains on the fence to tempt the thief again. The husband then hid himself, and patiently awaited events. He had not long to wait before up came a hungry little boy who seized the dish of food. The man then rushed out from his hiding-place, and seizing the little chap, exclaimed, "Who are you and where

do you come from ? Are you the one who has been stealing my food ? I will kill you, whoever you are ! ” The little boy, with apparently no shame or fear, looked calmly and steadily in the angry man’s face, and replied, “ Do not kill me, I am your own little boy. If you wish to know where I came from, I will tell you that I sprang out of the growing end of one of the yams your wife laid aside the other day. At first I was afraid to make myself known to you, and wandered about among the rocks ; and at last, feeling very hungry, I took your food. If you like I will now live with you always, and become really your own little son.” On hearing this speech the anger of the man completely vanished, and he and especially his wife were delighted ; for here was the child so ardently longed for since the day they were married. Very thankfully and heartily they welcomed him to their quiet home, and the three lived very happily together.

29. *Water Fairies.*

Near the village of Xepenehe, Lifu, there was formerly a large fresh-water pool which was the home of two spirits who assumed the form and features of two beautiful girls called “ lue pelu,” or twins. The word “ pelu ” also means “ virgin.” These charming fairies appeared to lead a life of exquisite joy and fun in and out of the water, and in all probability would have continued to dwell there until the present time but for the want of consideration shown them. It appears that the natives of Xepenehe, finding the soil to be good in the vicinity of the pool, began to plant gardens there, and so discovered the two fairies and their delightful home.

As the water was within easy reach of the natives, they got into the habit of dipping their hands into it, after working in their gardens ; and not only so, but some of them began to defile it by bathing their whole bodies in it.

Now the fairies were not so unreasonable as to object to the people taking water from their pool for drinking and cooking purposes, and would willingly have overlooked their presumption in washing their soiled hands there ; but that they should be so inconsiderate as to convert their lovely pool into a public bathing-place was an offence not to be endured. They therefore determined to quit the locality and to seek a new home elsewhere. No sooner did they leave the spot, than the water also disappeared, and the hole has continued quite dry to the present day.

In their selection of a second home, the two fairies were wise enough, and fortunate enough, to discover a delightfully romantic and wildly picturesque spot, now called "Huhnan," which, although quite close to the village, is practically inaccessible to man and beast. The pool of water lies at the bottom of a large natural cavity, some ten or eleven fathoms below the surface of the surrounding country. The opening is from twenty to forty fathoms across, so that the rays of the sun daily penetrate to the surface of the water, which covers a large portion of the bottom of the cave. The sides are precipitous, and adorned with maiden-hair and other graceful ferns, with here and there flowering shrubs to lend variety and charm to the scene.

Standing on the edge of the cavity and looking down into this fairy dell one can see a small island near

the centre of the lake consisting apparently of one large flat rock or stone, on which the two fairies prepare their food when all is quiet and there is no one to disturb them. This large stone is kept absolutely free from the weeds, ferns, and other vegetation which seems to clothe every other available spot in the interior of the cave. The fairies are most careful, too, to leave no litter, such as vines, banana leaves, sticks, or stones, used by them daily in the preparation of their "itras"; all is kept neat and trim as becometh the home of such beautiful and delicate beings.

Once or twice, natives or four-footed beasts have accidentally fallen down this cave; but, however badly injured they may have been, or even if the fall has proved fatal, there is never any hemorrhage, because the two fairies have decreed that no human blood shall ever contaminate the sacred precincts of their second home.

30. *How Two Virgins became Mothers of Chiefs.*

A long time ago there dwelt at the north end of Lifu, and close to the sea, two sisters. On a particular afternoon, they had just returned from their plantation with a supply of food for their evening meal, and having a little time at their disposal before beginning to make their "itra," and seeing that it was low tide, they strolled down to the beach to see if they could pick up anything to make their meal more savoury.

As they walked along the edge of the water, looking for shell-fish, crabs or sea-urchins, their attention was attracted by two twigs which were floating about in the water and keeping pace with their footsteps.

This state of things continued so persistently that the two girls felt annoyed, and returned home to attend to some other duties. When they had buried their "itra" in the native oven, moved by curiosity to see if the two twigs were still awaiting them, they again strolled towards the beach. They had not



LIFUAN GIRLS.

proceeded far, however, before they found the very identical twigs lying in their path. Each of the sisters picked up one and carried it home, carelessly throwing it aside on her arrival.

At a very early hour the next morning the elder sister heard a strange sound, like the crying of an infant, and on looking round she discovered that the

twig she had brought from the beach had split open, revealing to her astonished gaze a fine baby boy. She at once roused her sister, telling her the good news, and showing her the new-born baby. As they talked together about the little stranger, they distinctly heard a sound as of crackling wood, and looking towards another corner of the hut whence the noise seemed to come, they found additional cause for joy and wonder, for behold ! the second twig was in the act of splitting open, disclosing another male child.

The two sisters nursed and cared for the two welcome guests, who in course of time grew up to be strong and comely youths, able to go fishing and snaring birds as is the manner of youths of their years.

One day the two lads went a long journey of some twenty-five miles along the beach, when they came to the village of We, which they had heard their mothers speak of, and which they were curious to see. Just as they entered the large village they were seen by an old man, who, liking their appearance, called them "lue ju" or "two back bones" and insisted on their living with him in the future. They agreed to do so, and in the course of time the elder of the two (haetra) was made chief of the village. After some years, it was found that he lacked the qualities of a true chief, being too arrogant and presuming too much on the prerogatives of his exalted position. Accordingly he was deposed, the younger brother (cipa) being elected in his place. He, proving himself a better and more worthy chief, continued to hold the position, bequeathing it to his children and they to their children until the present day.

31. *The Bereaved Sisters.*

On a small islet lying off the north coast of Uvea there once lived a man and his wife with their one son and two daughters; they were the sole inhabitants of the island, which afforded ample sustenance for their bodily wants. When the two sisters were grown up and of marriageable age, the parents died, and left them in charge of the boy—their only brother. This charge was to them a matter of the gravest concern; their greatest fear being that someone from the mainland might any day come and demand their hands in matrimony; then who could watch over and provide for the dear boy's wants! For this reason they determined to leave their present home, and dwelt together on one of the more remote islets which encircled the lagoon, and where there would be less risk of their being discovered. Having decided on a suitable place they settled there, and lived very happily for some years in peaceful seclusion.

One day a party of fishermen, probably attracted by the smoke they saw ascending from the island, were seen paddling towards it. Although no one landed, and the canoe soon disappeared in the distance, the hearts of the two maidens became depressed with alarm and dark forebodings on account of their brother. On learning the cause of their trouble the boy protested that there was not the least occasion to worry, and greatly reassured them by saying, "Pray do not alarm yourselves any more about me; I will at once change myself into a 'Boene' (a species of gar fish), and I will make my future home in the pools of the rocks on the weather side of the island.

Catch as many fish as you like, but on no account kill a 'Boene' lest it should prove to be your own brother." Saying this, he plunged into the sea and was lost to view.

The sisters, now left alone, were comforted by the thought that their brother was not dead, but might return to them at some future time. They had reason to regret his absence, however, because of their reduced supply of fish, especially in rough and stormy weather. One day the younger of the two sisters crossed the island in search of shell-fish. It was a terribly hot day, and when she arrived she was parched with thirst. As she went along she tasted the water in all the little pools she came to, in the hope of finding some that was good enough to drink. She met with little success for a time, the water being all brackish. At length she was rewarded by finding a pool which was delightfully fresh and cool. She was just about to take a good drink, when she noticed a large eel lying at the bottom. This was a misfortune, but not sufficient to deter her from quenching her thirst. Taking the eel, whose native name was "Bonich," gently in her hand, she placed it on one side, not forgetting to replace it when she had drank her fill. Some hours later she reached home, and immediately began to experience feelings and thoughts quite new to her, and of which she spoke to her sister. In course of time a little son was born to her whom she named "Bonich," and who grew up to be a fine strong boy and an expert fisherman.

Now the sisters, whom, according to native custom, he called "mother," had never told him the story of "Bonich" his father or of "Boene" his uncle; but this they had strongly impressed upon him, that

on no account must he ever go fishing on the weather side of the island. As the boy grew older, he began to ask himself why the other side of the island should be so strictly tabooed. He longed very much to solve the mystery. Was there really anything to be afraid of, or was the prohibition merely the result of unreasonable parental solicitude on his behalf? One day, summoning up his courage, he determined to go and see the place and risk the consequences. He found the trip both agreeable and profitable, for he managed to spear a good-sized fish; so long was it indeed that he was unable to carry it home, and he was obliged to drag it along the ground. Leaving the fish a little distance from the house, he went to tell his mothers where he had been and what he had caught. To his astonishment, instead of the usual glad "ole" (thanks), both sisters began to weep and lament most bitterly. At sight of their grief the youth also became very sad. After a time they all ventured to go and inspect the fish, when the worst fears of the sisters were realised. Then their anger was roused intensely, and they accused their son of the murder of his own uncle "Boene," who they said was the real chief of the island, whilst *he* was a mere commoner. Many hard names they called him as they returned home together, but the boy only meekly answered, "Oh my mothers, don't cry any more; you say I am the son of Bonich, then I will go and look for my father. But oh my mothers, why did you not inform me of all this before?" He then took off his ornaments, his girdle of flying-fox wool, and the cowry shells from his arms and legs, and bidding the two sisters an affectionate farewell he left them. Crying bitterly—for the two women

now loved him more dearly than ever they had loved their brother—they followed the unhappy youth along the path until they arrived at the spot where he had speared the large fish. Here they stood together for a moment, when lo! they beheld a fine “bonich” leaping about on the surface of the water. The son, seeing this, rushed away to plunge into the sea, and though his mothers frantically tried to hold him back, he evaded their arms, and as he rose again to the surface, behold he too had become a “bonich.”

Sorrowfully the sisters returned to their home. The hope of their house was gone for ever. Sad and lonely they lived for many years, then passed away to the spirit land.

32. *A Long Night.*

In a part of the island of Lifu over which the great chief Ukenzo ruled, there dwelt in olden times a lonely widow and her only daughter. The piece of ground they had selected for their abode was far removed from any of the villages of their tribe, their nearest neighbours being many miles distant from their home. They suffered no great inconvenience from their solitary life except on very rare occasions. Unfortunately, neither of them had learned the art of kindling a fire by the friction of two pieces of wood, and so were obliged to exercise the greatest care in preserving that valuable household treasure. Now it happened that one day, returning from their plantation, they found that the last spark of their fire had died out, and they were obliged to eat their food raw. After many days the mother said to her

daughter, "My child, I am almost dead from eating uncooked food; climb up into one of the high trees, and look around in every direction to find if there is any smoke to be seen." The girl looked north, east, and west from the top of a high tree, but no smoke was to be seen. Then she looked in a southerly direction, across the large bay of Xepenehe, and at once called out that there was a fire at Gaica, about sixteen miles



NATURAL BAY OR BOAT COVE

away. With the permission of her mother she gladly set forth through the thick bush, and along the rocky coast, in the hope of securing a live fire-stick.

An adventure of this kind was a most welcome break in the dull routine of the young girl's daily life. Moreover, she was not insensible of her personal charms, and who could say how many youthful hearts might be captivated before her return. There was one special item of her adornment on which she could

certainly rely to produce a sensation and to excite universal envy, namely, her uncommonly long "emou" (it was customary among Lifuans to allow one tuft of hair to grow very long, which they called their "emou"). Sometimes she wore it coiled around her shapely head; at other times it was allowed to trail along the ground.

When the girl arrived at her destination she was kindly received by the people of Gaica, who willingly gave her a few fire-sticks for her mother, and greatly admired her wonderful "emou." After a short rest she started on her return journey, and the sun being very hot she let loose her "emou," which trailed behind her for miles and miles.

Some children at play near one of the villages through which the girl had passed, observing the end of her "emou" moving along the ground, exclaimed "What's this?" and picking it up they cut off a piece, at which it began to bleed. When the girl reached home, all unconscious of her loss, she began to draw in her "emou," and alas! she found that the end was gone and that her hair had been bleeding. She grieved and cried very much, the poor mother trying in vain to comfort her. As the weeping showed no signs of abatement, the sympathetic mother said, "My daughter, do not cry any more; I will severely punish those people who have spoiled your beautiful 'emou.'" Saying which, she went outside the hut and caught one of the little birds called "sisi," which are the first to begin their twitterings in the early morning. She tied up the beak of the little bird so that it could no longer warn the people of the dawn of day, and putting it in her little bag she started off with her daughter, and soon found the place where the

children lived who had damaged the precious "emou." They accepted the invitation of the villagers to remain with them for a time. As soon as they were left alone in the hut, the girl's mother secreted the little bird she had brought with her, under the floor mat.

Then darkness came over land and sea, even as far as the island of Uvea. The people slept and awoke, and wondered when daylight would again appear. But no daylight came; indeed, how could it, there being no bird to call it forth? This state of darkness continued so long that the people were obliged to collect their food by torchlight, and many fell into the crevices and holes of the rocks and were killed.

One of the big chiefs from the island of Uvea came over to inquire the cause of the prolonged night, and seeing that there was a little light about the hut occupied by the mother and daughter, he begged them to dispel the darkness. He offered a large hank of flying-fox wool—"dela"—to the mother, but she refused it, saying, "It is my daughter who is in great trouble; I will talk to her." The only answer of her daughter, however, was, "Tell him to go back. I don't want any 'dela'; what is 'dela' to me? I want my 'emou.'"

Another day the chief of Gaica paid them a visit, with the same object in view, and offered the girl a string of cowry shells, "Wasisi." But she refused them, saying, "What are wasisis to me? I want my 'emou.'"

The big chief of her own district, Ukenzo, then paid them a visit, taking as his present a lovely string of jade beads; but even these were powerless to soothe her wounded heart, and again she rejected the offering,

saying, "What are such trifles compared to the loss of my 'emou?' " Still dense darkness prevailed over the whole land.

Another visit was at length paid them by the chief of Mu—the last of the big chiefs on the island. His present was a set of beautiful white bracelets made from large cone-shells. The girl was evidently attracted by them, but finally rejected them, saying, "My 'emou' was more to me than all the treasures of the world."

Now the chief of Mu before leaving home had called a man and his wife and child to accompany him as his attendants and to carry the presents for the girl and her mother. Before they had gone very far along the road the child began to cry. He had sores—"tonas"—on his feet, and the sharp rocks caused him so much pain that walking became very difficult for him. His parents therefore ordered him to return home; and the three elders proceeded on their journey alone, or at least they supposed so. The child, however, wishing to see the presentation and to learn the result of the chief's quest, followed them at a short distance, keeping well in the shadow of their torches. As they went along the boy's father noticed a pretty red bird, which he caught and put into his bag; again he noticed a small red calabash floating in the sea, this also he placed in his bag.

During their stay at Gaica, and after their presents had been refused, they sat chatting in the hut; when the child began to amuse himself with the contents of his father's bag—especially with the red bird and the red calabash. The sorrowing girl, seeing these, soon became captivated by the brightness of their colouring. She begged that she might have them for her own, and

they were readily given to her. She was so much gratified by these simple gifts that her anger and sorrow quite disappeared, and at her request the mother took the "sisi" from its hiding-place, unfastened the cord from its beak, when it set up a vigorous twittering, and the darkness was dispelled from the face of the earth.

CHAPTER XIII

LIFUAN PROVERBS

“TULU kö tulu” = “Measure for measure,” or “tit for tat.”

“Iupe keune” = “Teach your grandmother to suck eggs,” or “Teach a canoe maker to make a canoe.”

“Qale ne nu” = literally “Crooked coconut palm.” The idea conveyed by this proverb is that although the tree may be crooked, it may bear good fruit. A mother will sometimes say of her wayward son, “Qale ne nu,” meaning he may be bad but there is much good in him.

“Sa itra do kö ate xelem” = He who plants should have the itra (pudding) made of the food planted.

“Ame la föe, te, ate thupa hlapa” = It is the woman who causes (or is responsible for) dissensions in the family or locality. (*Cherchez la femme.*)

“Si atemeni thihlë, si ko nge teije kö” = The flying fox bathes (or plays) amongst the leaves of a certain tree which is poisonous, and causes great skin irritation; he is aware of the folly, and cries out with pain, but still he does not leave the tree. In other words, one may know a thing to be wrong, yet one continues to do it.

“Hnaho pi xetë a xetë” = “A chip of the old block,” or “The young bird is like the old one.”

“Fifëkë ne awa” = The swallow spends his time flying round and round a tree which bears good fruit, but does not eat, whilst other birds are enjoying the fruit. The idea is that the swallow is an emblem of the busybody, one who wastes his time on useless trifles, but neglects his own duties.

“Kuie wëtesiji hnengödraië” = literally “Throw a star up to the sky,” or “Give to him who has abundance,” or “Send coals to Newcastle.”

“Ase hë kiuë la dohno” = literally “The young banana leaf is torn.” The tender leaves of the banana tree are necessary in the cooking of an “itra,” but if torn they are almost useless. Hence the proverb implies that a certain thing is done and cannot be undone, and there is nothing more to be said about it. “Why cry over spilled milk.”

“Ate kö kuli laka kuhu” = literally “The dog knows that his place is outside the house.” Often during a quarrel, when the vanquished one does not venture to approach the house occupied by his enemy he may be taunted by the proverb, “The dog knows he has to remain outside.”

“Tha hmo a ijelë i Ciciëti me Kucahlu, oni kete ‘jö ine qe’” = “The tea-kettle would be a fool to call the saucepan black.” The kingfisher (Ciciëti) and the bird (“Kucahlu”) would be fools to call each other “long beak,” seeing that the beak of the one is about as long as that of the other.

“I wenge i siapala, ca ate fefu a tro hnagejë eë, nge ca ate fefa a tro helepu eë.” This proverb depicts two men on a fishing raft, one paddling seaward, and the other towards the shore. It is frequently applied to a man and wife living at loggerheads.

“Mele kö umane ze” corresponds with our proverb

“ There are more fish in the sea,” etc. It is often quoted to a mother who has lost her child ; the idea being that as the mother still lives she may have more children.

“ Isa xote thenge wen önin ” = A man goes after his own bread-fruit. Should a man’s fruit tree extend its branches over a neighbour’s plantation, he would not hesitate to trespass so far as to gather his own fruit. This proverb is often used of visitors claiming the hospitality of one of their own tribe who has married, or settled in another tribe.

“ Me ö kö lai, nge qa sha kö la ” = “ Each country has its own methods.” Literally “ You thus we thus,” a common retort when any stranger suggested a different way of doing a thing.

“ Munë ne wenge pë hë ” = literally “ the remains of a fishing raft.” Instead of speaking of a young woman who has not married as an “ old maid,” or as “ being on the shelf,” she was compared with the piece of wood that might be left unused after the construction of a fishing raft.

“ Dohno ne temën ” = “ Two strings to his bow.” It is commonly applied to a young man who is engaged to more than one girl.

“ Hetru i folofolowieti.” This is spoken in ridicule of one eating heartily on the eve of a public feast, and can be applied to any unprofitable undertaking.

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